

King.—I open the doors of this dark room to-day—the game is finished here! Come, come with me now, come outside—*into the light!*

Sudarshana.—Before I go, let me bow at the feet of my lord of darkness, my cruel, my terrible, my peerless one!”

Thus ends this wonderful drama of the soul. Though it is not a play in the usual sense of the word, it is peerless in its beauty and its spiritual suggestiveness. We know what spiritual beauty and truth lies in the *Prabodhachandrodaya*—the play where in noble and musical Sanscrit the life of the soul is depicted in allegory. The drama by Tagore is even more entrancingly beautiful and suggestive. It will require volumes to disclose its beauty and spiritual meaning. Let us close the book with reverent hands and pray to the Lord to lead us “into the light.”

THE ECHOES OF THE TEACHINGS OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

BY

Dr. M. C. Nanjunda Row.

IV

(An Evening-talk on Sivaji).

It was a beautiful moonlit night and Swamiji was sitting in the verandah of the bungalow of the late Mr. Bhattacharjee on the South Beach of Madras (already referred to), conversing in Hindi with Mr. Munshi Jagamohanlal, the private secretary of the Maharajah of Khetri. This gentleman had been sent by the Maharajah to trace out the whereabouts of the Swamiji and to fetch him back to Khetri to bless the newly born son and heir to the State. When Swamiji was at Khetri about a year previously, the Maharajah of Khetri had begged of him to confer the boon of a son and Swamiji while he was in one of his higher moods had actually blessed him saying that God had granted his prayer. So the Maharajah wanted Swamiji back in his palace at any cost and could not remain contented until he saw him. When I went over there after my office work I prostrated before Swamiji and took my seat; and suddenly Swamiji began to sing a Hindi song in praise

of Sivaji in his own masterly way, the last two lines of which were :—

दावा हुमदंड पर चित्ता मृग झुंड पर,
भूषण बितंड पर जैसे मृगराज हैं ;
तेज तम अंशपर काह्न जिम कंसपर,
त्योँ मिलेच्छ वसंपर शर शिवराज हैं ॥

(As forest-fire is to the forest trees, a leopard to the deer-herds and a lion to the stately elephants ; as the sun is to the darkness of the night, as Krishna was to Kansa, so was king Sivaji, a lion, towards the hordes of Mlechchas.)

It was a long song as I learnt it afterwards ; but I who had learnt in my school days that Sivaji was a cunning unprincipled freebooter, “an upstart robber,” a marauder and a treacherous murderer, suddenly interrupted Swamiji and asked him how that praise and those lines were justified in the case of Sivaji. Was he not a mere child of fortune, a marauder who collected similar men like himself and succeeded in establishing a kingdom by sheer cunning and treachery ? Swamiji immediately gave up his singing and saw me full in the face, his face being lit up with the fire of indignation and said, “Shame on you, Doctor. You are a Maharatta and still that is all you know of the greatest king that India had produced within the last three hundred years ; one who was the very incarnation of Siva, about whom prophecies were given out long before he was born ; and his advent was eagerly expected by all the great souls and saints of Maharashtra as the deliverer of the Hindus from the hands of the Mlechchas and one who succeeded in the establishment of the Dharma which had been trampled under foot by the depredations of the devastating hordes of the Moghals. This is what comes of your reading Indian History written by foreigners who could have no sympathy with you, nor could they have any respect for your culture, traditions, manners and customs which they could not understand. Is there a greater hero, a greater saint, a greater bhakta and a greater king than Sivaji ? Sivaji was the very embodiment of a born ruler of men as typified in your great Epics. He was the type of the real son of India representing the true consciousness of the nation. It was he who showed what the future of India is going to be sooner or later, a group of independent units under one umbrella as it were, *i.e.*, under one supreme imperial suzerainty.” I was simply thunderstruck and seemed to myself so small, so foolish and so ignorant ; still the spirit of enquiry in me

could not be put down even by those eloquent and fiery words of indignation which Swamiji gave expression to, for I thought whatever might be said of Sivaji there could be no explanation for his treacherous conduct towards Afzul Khan, the great Pathan commander sent from the court of Bijapur, whom he is said to have killed under circumstances which any one who has a spark of morality in him could not but abhor. Still with some amount of hesitation but with a mischievous curiosity to find out how Swamiji could condone this treacherous deed of Sivaji, I begged of him to tell us something about the real life-history of Sivaji and what he thought of his one act which had been considered the greatest blot in his life and on account of which his character had been painted so black.

Then Swamiji began to give a brief account of the life of Sivaji, with great feeling and enthusiasm and we listened to the same with great eagerness and rapt attention; for so engrossing and interesting it was to listen to those soul-stirring words of Swamiji who spoke at the time with so great an earnestness and yet with so much pity and kindness. It was a pity there was no one to take down all that he spoke that evening in shorthand, nor did I make any notes at the time either, for my mind was so absorbed in following his narrative that the idea of taking down any notes never entered my brain. Yet the indelible impressions he made on even our callous hearts that memorable evening do still persist though somewhat dimmed, and the following is but an imperfect reproduction of those impressions.

“Doctor,” began Swamiji, “it is a pity that in our schools, History of India written by foreigners alone is taught to our boys. The foreign writers of the Mahratta History can never shake off their bias nor understand the real character and greatness and the inner motive of the actions of Sivaji. We cannot blame them for their beliefs which more or less depended on the writings of the Mussalman chroniclers who out of spite and hatred, denounced Sivaji as a *Falim* or freebooter. On the other hand there are many Mahratta *bakhars* or chroniclers who have written about him but who, true to their ancient puranic ideal, looked upon Sivaji as an incarnation of God born to relieve His devotees from the oppressions of Mahomedan fanaticism and to re-establish the Dharma. Naturally the foreign writers leaned on the side of the Mussalman chroniclers and considered the account given by the Mahrattas as mere superstition. But fortunately there are many

independent Persian manuscripts dealing with the history of Aurangzeeb, Sivaji and the Bijapur kings. They corroborate the account of the Mahratta chroniclers so far as facts are concerned, though they do not share in their belief of the superhuman nature of the exploits of Sivaji. And if young men who have any patriotic feeling towards the history of their motherland were to make researches in finding out and translating these manuscripts much truer light may be thrown on the greatness of the doings of Sivaji and of many others who helped in the formation of the great Mahratta Confederacy and it will be a valuable addition to our knowledge of the real History of India."

"But before proceeding to narrate some of the main incidents from Sivaji's life", said Swamiji "let us see what was the state of India just before the birth of Sivaji. The rise of Maharatta power in India was one of those sudden and surprising revolutions which, amid the troubled currents of political events, have been so frequently seen to spring from the reaction of despotism. The Moghal Empire under the absolute direction of Aurangzeeb extended over nearly the whole of India. Aurangzeeb was a tyrant who ruled ably though despotically. The Maharattas were a hardy and active race who inhabited the extensive plains of the Deccan surrounded by those elevated chains of mountains called the Ghats which formed a natural and almost impregnable barrier against the inroads of any invading army. Nearly three centuries of Mahomedan invasion which preceded the birth of Sivaji had left lasting memories of great horrors and oppressions by Mahomedans, and the threatened invasion of the Deccan by the troops of the tyrant Aurangzeeb gave rise in the minds of many, to all sorts of apprehensions of the renewal of fanatical intolerance and cruelty which the Mahomedan conquerors were prone to exhibit in their dealings with the people of the country. There was already ruin of all virtue and religion and the noblest in the land had been made to suffer. Hence a universal prayer seemed to have gone from the heart of these people to the great God of Mercy for the birth of a deliverer. The time also seemed ripe for the birth of such a person and ample opportunities were afforded to a leader of daring and comprehensive mind to assemble the Maharattas who formed now the disunited members of a vast and dislocated empire, and to establish them into an independent community, upon the wreck of that power by which they had been subdued. Such a leader was Sivaji, the founder of the Maharatta dynasty, which finally became the most flourishing in Hindustan,"

There were many prophecies in the Deccan about the birth of a Deliverer from the oppressions of the Moghals. It looks as if this very oppression gave rise to a growth of religious spirit amongst the people which was such a peculiar feature of the times. Quite a galaxy of god-intoxicated, and self-realised men were going about the country preaching the people that the upholding of the Dharma was the be-all and the end-all of life. Samartha Rama Das, Thukaram, Ekanath and a host of others were all more or less contemporaries of Sivaji.

“There is one prophecy” said Swamiji, “that comes to my mind and that is that of the Hermit of Matheran given as a piece of advice to his pupil Nettaji Palkar. This Hermit of Matheran was once a great soldier, a pious man who had renounced the world and devoted the last days of his life, entirely to Yogic practices and meditation of God. He was a past-master in the arts of not only military warfare, but also in the use of the sword, spear and the bow. And this Nettaji Palkar plays a very important part in the exploits of Sivaji as his right hand in leading the command of his selected troops of Mowlies. When Nattaji Palkar after serving his apprenticeship under the great saint learnt from him the art of throwing spear, archery and sword-play he was directed by the Hermit to leave him and go abroad to serve his motherland. The following advice is said to have been given to him by the Hermit. “My son, see that thou usest aright the knowledge and power that thou hast gained. Never draw thy sword except to defend the oppressed and in the cause of thy religion and thy countrymen. Amongst the signs of approaching death are the clear visions of the future that pour in upon my soul, the great God Siva has again and again appeared to me and revealed to me that he has taken the form of a man to free Maharashtra. Would that it were vouchsafed to me to fight by his side in the glorious struggle! It may not be; but it is something that I can send him as his servant thee, the son of my heart.

“ Often I see the incarnate God leading his warriors against the bearded hosts of Islam, and ever I see thee at his right hand in the day of victory and the hour of danger. For he is not always victorious and triumphant. No, he is like yonder stately anjan-tree, that bends ever and anon before the might of tempest, but is never broken or uprooted. Sometimes he is a fugitive and sometimes I see him bending low to the lordly foe. But he ever rises again, and the seeming suppliant plunges his deadly sword into the heart

of the enemy, who is deluded into thinking him conquered. O! for one hour of the joy of battle by his side, when he turns like a tiger on his pursuers and drives them to perdition!

“Oh, my son, treasure my visions in thy heart, for perchance this may be the last time that fate allows me to address thee. Thou wilt stand by the side of the great saviour of his people, when at last triumphant over all his enemies, he takes his seat on his golden throne under the silken umbrella, the symbol of his regal power, as an Emperor of Maharashtra. I see in my mind's eye the Brahmins and ministers sprinkling over his head the waters brought from the most sacred rivers and fountains of India, and the golden lotus flowers set with precious jewels distributed among the immense concourse assembled on the airy mountain of Rairi to greet him on the great day that consummates his work on earth. Even farther into the misty future my vision bears me, to the time when the incarnate God returns to his heavenly home. His work remains firmly built by his wisdom and might. His successors lead their followers far beyond the bounds of Maharashtra, till they sit as conquerors in the palaces of Dehli and Agra, and water their steeds in the sacred stream of the Ganges.

“And now my son, go apart and ponder over all my words, while I pray for thee and for our country, and beseech the great Gods to hasten the time of deliverance.*

“There are many such accounts current amongst the traditions of the Maharatta people but it only shows that there was a strong under-current of desire in the minds of the people for the appearance of a deliverer from the oppression of the Mahomedans and how that took shape in the minds of the pure and holy saints in the form of visions and prophecies so common before the birth of great souls in any country or in any age.

Sivaji was born in the fort of Shiveneri in the year 1627 A.D. His mother Jija Bai had been forsaken on the road by her husband Shaji when he fled to Bijapur pursued by his own father-in-law on account of some enmity that cropped up between him and his father-in-law at the time. She was then in a delicate state of health and her father who was pursuing Shaji met her and sent her to that fort and provided for her comforts. Jija Bai on reaching Shiveneri devoted most of her time to the worship of the Goddess

* Some of the incidents mentioned by Swamiji I found in my later studies, described by Prof. Macmillan in his historical romance called “In the Wild Mahratta War,” and by Colonel Meadows Taylor in his “Tara.” These incidents I have reproduced in the words of these authors.

Bhavani who flourished there under the name of *Shive* and was believed by all the people there as a powerful Goddess who granted the true prayers of her devotees. This pure-hearted and devoutly pious lady prayed to Bhavani saying that if she bore a son who should be after her heart she would name him after her august self; and after some days she gave birth to our hero and named him Sivaji.

There were many influences which contributed to make Sivaji great, the earliest and the most important being the influence of his divinely noble mother Jija Bai. She was the daughter of the proudest Maharatta jagirdar of the time. The women of India especially those of the higher classes and families are invariably the treasuries of family events and deeds of departed or existing greatness. Jija Bai who was fired with an amount of ambition unheard of before, strove hard to excite her husband Shaji to exertion in the cause of the Hindus and the Hindu Religion and she sought out the histories of his family, filled his minds with the legends of their power and urged him to assert his rights to regular sovereignty of districts in which he was then only an official head. She actively canvassed all the heads of the Maharatta families with a view to combine resistance against the Mahomedan powers, then beginning to show symptoms of a final decadence. But with no effect, as Shaji the servant and vassal of the Emperor of Delhi as the king of Bijapur, though a bold and enterprising partisan soldier, was restless and of a vascillating disposition and lacked the higher qualities which could direct and take advantage of such movements. He was unable to understand the spirit of this great woman, so he married another wife and lived with her in his jagir in the Karnatic for a number of years. But nothing checked his wife's ambition. Jija Bai abandoned both by her father and her husband, had good reasons to feel in her own person the indignity of foreign subjection. In her desolate condition young Sivaji was all in all for her and she brought him up relying solely on the protection of the Gods, especially Goddess Bhavani, who had spared her and her child in the midst of such afflictions. The hill forts which surrounded their place of residence were associated in Sivaji's memories as his only safe home, and no wonder with such a mother and associations, he developed a character of hardihood and enterprise from his early days. The boy loved his mother with affection which had no bounds. His father never lived with him but his mother was always at hand. Throughout his life she was the guiding genius and protecting deity whose approbation rewarded all toil and filled him with a courage which nothing could daunt. The

religious turn of mind and the strong faith of his mission, so prominent in his character, Sivaji owed entirely to his mother, who literally fed him on the old puranic legends of bravery and war. In all the great crisis of his life he first invoked her blessings and she always charged him to attempt the most hazardous feats trusting in Divine protection. His mother, an ardent votary of the Goddess Bhavani was occasionally visited by the Goddess in vision and being filled with divine afflatus spoke prophecy. Sivaji believed in her inspiration. It was a habit of Sivaji to go to no ceremony, nor return from any, without saluting his mother. Did he ever leave the house or return to it, he touched her feet reverently, while she gave her blessing. The son's faith in his mother was only equalled by her faith in and love for him ; and as a pattern of filial piety and devotion his example is still inculcated upon the Maharatta youth by many a village school master who has not come under the influence of the grant-in-aidcode. If ever great men owed their inspiration to their mothers the influence of Jija Bai was a factor of prime importance in the making of Sivaji's career and the chief source of his strength.

Says Meadows Taylor, " Left to herself with her young son amongst the native wilds surrounded by rude retainers, Jija Bai turned to Sivaji as soon as he could comprehend her plans ; and by the mother and son those designs were sketched out which, in respect of utter hopelessness at first and splendid success afterwards, have few comparisons in the world's history."

Next to Jija Bai's influence over young Sivaji, during the most impressionable period of his life, was the influence exerted by Dadoji Kondadev, the agent of Shaji, who stood in Shaji's place as guardian of his child, and administrator of his estates. By disposition he was cautious to a degree which made it difficult for him at times to sympathise with the wild freedom with which Sivaji loved to roam over the hills but his love for his charge was unstinted ; and at last he was persuaded that Sivaji was not to be judged by the ordinary standards of men and that the ideas over which the young man brooded were of a sort in which failure was glorious. Sivaji's wildness needed the curb and the guidance of a strict disciplinarian like Dadoji. He taught the young boy all the arts of peace and war which it was good for him to know and he taught him what was more valuable still, the way to organise and control undisciplined troops. Above all, Dadoji was a master-hand in the art of civil government, and Sivaji's revenue system and his government were entirely modelled upon the practice of his teacher but for whose guiding

hand, the success which attended Sivaji's rule would not have been so certain and permanent as it proved to be.

I do not mean, said Swamiji, to dwell on the military exploits nor on the excellence of the civil government of Sivaji. Those are matters of ordinary history but I only wish to narrate such instances of Sivaji's doing as will show in relief what a great soul he was. Thus under the combined influence of Jija Bai and Dadoji Kondadev the boy grew up and became an expert in all martial exercises and accomplishments. Even while he was young he was joined by many young men of his times in his enterprises against the Mahomedans, which to the people savoured of madness, but which, as they increased in boldness of design and execution, were believed by his companions to be the deeds of one especially protected by the Goddess Bhavani. These young men, undisciplined and unarmed as they were in their early days joined their leader Sivaji in scaling mountain forts, descending into the plains beyond the valleys gathering arms and booty, occupying Mahomedan garrisons, putting their defenders to death and never relinquishing what they had obtained. So year after year passed and young Sivaji as he grew stronger became more daring and enterprising. His companions sympathised with their young master's spirit of adventure and they and their kindred spirits proved of eminent service to him in his ambitious plans. There was such a charm about Sivaji's personality that even those who were his enemies and whom he had conquered on the battle field, became his trusted followers. Even the Mahomedans felt the influence that was at work. Sivaji's Chief Admiral Darya Sarung was a Mahomedan and fought with the Siddhi admirals of the Moghuls; and so was Ebrahim Khan, a Pathan leader, a Mahomedan. Sivaji by his great personality filled the rank and file of his followers with his own spirit and this was the mission of his life. The men whose powers and counsels helped Sivaji to found the kingdom were themselves endowed with a high sense of duty. Not one failed in doing his duty in time of danger, not one proved treacherous to his master or went over to the enemy while many died at their posts in the hour of victory consoled with the thought that they faithfully did the service assigned to them by their great and loving master.

All this was due to the fact that Sivaji's mind was cast in intensely religious mould and he continued to be above all, religious throughout his chequered career. Sivaji felt in him what religious enthusiasm alone can inspire, the feeling that he had a commission which required him to think little of his own interests

and advancement but to devote his whole life to the cause of his country and his people.

To give but a few instances of the religious aspects of the life of Sivaji, said Swamiji, in the first place one must know that Sivaji was not a man of letters. He despised reading and writing but he was intensely fond of hearing the old epics, the Ramayana and the Mahabharatta, and trying to imitate the heroes in the deeds of valour. A fascination for sacred plays or *Kathas* as they were termed which had possessed him from childhood, was a strange peculiarity of his character. As he grew up, no distance, no personal danger, deterred him from being present at any *Katha* which could by any possibility be reached. He would walk many miles to attend a " *Katha* " or recital of them by specially noted God-intoxicated, highly evolved spiritual teachers. Sometimes openly and more frequently in a peasant's or soldier's garb the young prince with a few chosen associates would appear at places where his arrival was incomprehensible and his disappearance equally abrupt and mysterious. In the latter days, these *Kathas* became the means of assembling his men without attracting suspicion ; but his adherents well knew that the most exciting enterprises immediately followed them.

One instance of Sivaji endangering his person on account of his great passion for hearing *Kathas* from Godly persons and the miraculous escape he had, I should like to state, said Swamiji.

(*To be continued.*)

EDUCATION.

" Education is the manifestation of the perfection already in man "—thus in a short pithy sentence the Swami Vivekananda has shown the ideal of education. Man is potentially perfect, and he is struggling ever to give full manifestation to that latent perfection. His life is a long history of that struggle.

In the seed lie hidden all the possibilities of a full-grown tree, and it is trying hard to give full expression to them ; but their expression is determined by the action and reaction of two conflicting forces : one is trying for its manifestations and the other is thwarting it. For convenience's sake let us call the favourable force as internal and the unfavourable one as external. And the manifestation of the tree in any form depends exactly upon the adjustment of

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IV

(An evening talk on Sivaji).

(Continued from page 218).

Swamiji continued " I have already mentioned that some of the great saints were contemporaries of Sivaji, and one should also remember that the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries marked an epoch in the world's history being a period of great religious upheaval all over Europe and Asia. In India itself this upheaval was general and not confined to the Mahratta country. It resulted in a wide-spread popular awakening. In India Religion always preceded national awakenings. In Northern India and the Punjab, Guru Nanak went about stirring the people to wake up and made a supreme effort to reconcile the underlying spiritual truths of Hinduism and Mahomedanism. In Bengal and other Eastern parts Chaitanya sought to wean men from the insensate sacrifice of animal lives accompanying the worship of *Sakti* and *Kali*, and bring them to the sweet and loving faith of *Bhagavath* ; and many others like Kabir, Tulsidas, etc., contributed each in his own way to the work of spiritual enlightenment. Though the work of these has been great and abiding, it cannot be compared with the work done by the saints and prophets of Maharashtra. Like the political struggle for independence, the religious upheaval was also not the work of a single man or even of a single century but always kept pace with the political struggle itself. The Mahomedan invasions for a time seemed to have paralysed all religious activity but gradually the national spirit regained its healthy elasticity and just about the time of the rise of the Mahratta power there was a galaxy of saints whose names have become household words with the people of the country. . . . These great teachers flourished for nearly two centuries and then they seem to have become more or less extinct, and this curiously coincides with the loss of the political power of the Mahrattas themselves."

In this connection it would be interesting to note what Justice Ranade says :—" The close connection between the religious and political upheaval in Maharashtra is a fact of such importance that to these who, without the help of this clue, have tried to follow the

winding course of the growth of Maratta power the purely political struggle becomes either a puzzle or dwindles down into a story of adventures without any abiding moral interest. Both European and Native writers have done but scant justice to this double character of the movement and this dissociation of the history of the spiritual emancipation of the national mind accounts for much of the prejudice which still surrounds the study of the Maratta struggle for national independence.

“ Many of these Maratta saints were born in low castes. They belonged to all classes, and followed all callings—*Marathas*, *Kumbhis*, tailors, gardeners, potters, goldsmiths, repentant prostitutes and slave girls and even the outcaste *Mahars* (or *Panchamas*). A few of them were women and a few were Mahomedan converts to Hinduism. Thus the influence of higher spirituality was not confined to this or that class, but permeated deep, through all strata of society, male or female, high or low, literate or illiterate, Hindu and Mahomedan alike. These are features which the religious history of few other countries can match or reproduce unless where the elevating influence is the result of a wide-spread popular awakening.” *

“ These saints by their repeated preachings and exhortations to the people,” Swamiji said, “ did invaluable service in the awakening and development of the national spirit among the Mahrattas by rousing their minds from a state of religious torpor and directing them to an enthusiastic observance of the great tenets of Hindu religion, such tenets particularly as forcibly brought to their comprehension,—the eternal Verities of Moral Law and man’s higher spiritual life. It is these preachings and the direct influence of one of them, the great Samartha Rama Doss, on Sivaji that led to the political advancement and territorial aggrandizement of the Mahrattas. How Samartha Rama Doss became the Guru of Sivaji and what influence he wielded on his life and doings we shall see later on,” continued Swamiji, “ but for the present the danger to which Sivaji exposed himself on account of his great passion for hearing *kathas* and from which he escaped so miraculously was in connection with a religious discourse or sermon preached by the most celebrated saint Tukaram. He was one of the greatest of the Mahratta saints and though only a Kumbhi or a ryot of a sudra caste by birth yet his influence for spiritual upliftment even now is very great, for whoever has read his famous *Abhangas*, cannot but be influenced by the soul-stirring nature of his teachings. He was a great bhakta of *Vitoba* of Pandarpur and went from place to place

* See Justice M. G. Ranade’s “ Rise of the Maratta Power,”

exhorting people to develop real faith in the living God and eschew all meaningless ceremonies the literal observances of which without knowing their significance and the value attached to such show of observance in popular mind to the detriment of the real genuine faith in God, have been one of the causes of spiritual degeneration of the age. The ceremonies which during their early constitution had the sanction of ancient authority and tradition, became crystallised and were monopolised by the most learned class, *i.e.*, Brahmin caste, and it was against the exclusive spirit of this caste domination that these saints struggled most manfully to protest." To quote Justice Ranade once again, They asserted the dignity of the human soul as residing in all human beings quite independently of the accident of its births and social ranks and by their own lives and example, they have tended to elevate the national conception of man's spiritual nature and shake the hold of caste-intolerance. The result of all this elevated teaching is seen in the fact that caste exclusiveness now finds no place in the religious sphere of life and it is relegated solely to the social concerns of men and even there its restrictiveness is much relaxed as any one who compares the Brahmins of South India with their exclusive caste prejudices with the comparative indifference shown in such matters in the Deccan portions of the Maharashtra. This feeling of indifference is most accentuated at the times of annual religious gatherings and mixed greetings with which the Lord's feast (the Brahmothsavam of Sri Vitoba of Pandarpur) is celebrated on the last day, and creates a belief in the minds of all men and women that they are free to attain salvation by faith and love in spite of their low origin. It is said of Chokhamela—the outcaste *Mahar* (Pariah) saint—that when he was taken to task for his temerity in having dared to enter the temple at Pandarpur he replied that his God took him inside by force and, that he did not go of his own accord and he at once burst forth with his famous song "What availeth birth in high caste, what availeth rites or learning, if there is no devotion or faith? Though a man be of low caste, yet if he is faithful in heart, and loves God and regards all creatures as though they were like himself, and makes no distinction between his own and other people's children, and speaks the truth, his caste is pure and God is pleased with him. Never ask a man's caste when he has in his heart faith in God and love of men. God wants in his children love and devotion and he does not care for his caste". There is greater need now for emphasising the above truths and urging on all the necessity for the development of real love and faith or true *Bhakti* towards God,

a commodity which has become more and more scarce in these days of Godless education.

“Such pure teachings had always a fascination for Sivaji. News was brought to him that Swami Tukaram was in a small town about 20 miles from Satara, and that he had arranged to hold a Katha in the house of one of the influential inhabitants of that little town. No sooner did Sivaji hear of it than he made up his mind to attend the Katha somehow that evening. He dressed himself as an ordinary ryot (villager) and went to that little town all the way walking. The Mahomedans who had heard of the exploits of Sivaji and were in great terror of him, were bent on capturing him somehow unawares and put an end to his life. One of them who had noticed Sivaji though *incognito* going to the house where Saint Tukaram was preaching his sermon, carried the news to the commander of the garrison who immediately despatched a small party of horsemen to surround the place and capture Sivaji. It was a moonlight night and it was near midnight when Sri Tukaram was all absorbed in delivering his sermon with a feeling of sincere devotion and great enthusiasm and the whole audience were listening to him spell-bound. In the midst of this audience sat Sivaji in the garb of an ordinary villager but the keen eye of Tukaram had already detected who he was. Sivaji sat motionless imbibing every word that fell from the lips of the saint forgetful of everything around him. In the midst of this soul-stirring discourse, all on a sudden, the saint was observed to stop abruptly and stand for a minute or so motionless and speechless with eyes turned up as if in deep meditation and recovering himself resumed his discourse. Within a few minutes after, it was observed that a figure exactly like that of Sivaji in his villager's garb emerged out of the place and went out of the house and no notice of it was taken by the audience. On the other hand Tukaram saw the figure going out and it was followed by the small band of horsemen that were seen surrounding the place. When Tukaram finished his discourse it was near day break; and after that he is said to have talked to Sivaji in private and blessed him, and informed him of the danger he was in and how the great and merciful God Vitoba saved him on account of his (Sivaji's) real love and faith in Him. It is said that the horsemen who followed the track of that figure were lured into a forest from which they could not find their way out till next morning, by which time Sivaji was safe in his house at Satara.

“The cause of this sudden interruption in the discourse,” said Swamiji, “was owing to the fact that Saint Tukaram who was

standing facing the main gate of the big house saw the Mahomedan horsemen investing the house and he immediately divined the cause to be the presence of Sivaji in the audience. Tukaram had already known of the great love and faith Sivaji had in God and hence he stopped abruptly and spontaneously sent an appeal to his God Vitoba to save him from the present danger. Truly God answers the true prayers of a pure heart and confounds the wisdom of the mighty and nothing is impossible to Him !! ”

The danger from which Sivaji so narrowly escaped did not in the least abate his ardour for listening to these Kathas, on the other hand it whetted his appetite for adventure and he was seen on another occasion listening to an exposition of the story of Kuchela by Sadhu Goswami. In the course of this exposition Goswami began to dwell on the need of a Guru's initiation and grace for one's salvation and he dwelt on the subject with such great feeling and vehemence, quoting authorities after authorities from all parts of our sacred literature that Sivaji was moved to realise his own miserable state in not having found a Guru till then.”

(To be continued.)

THE PLACE OF RELIGION IN INDIA.

We make no apology in quoting the following from the observation of one of the genuine thinkers of Modern India as it requires constant re-iteration for the up-keep of our true National vigour :—

“ Religion always in India, precedes national awakenings. Sankaracharya was the beginning of a wave that swept round the whole country, culminating in Chayitanya in Bengal, the Sikh gurus in the Punjab, Sivaji in Maharashtra and Ramanuja and Madvacharya in the South. Through each of these a people sprang into self-realisation, into national energy and consciousness of their own unity.” Sri Ramakrishna represents a synthesis in one person of all the leaders. It follows that the movements of his age will unify and organise the more provincial and fragmentary movements of the past.

Ramakrishna is the epitome of the whole. His was the great superconscious life which alone can witness to the infinitude of the current that bears us all oceanwards. He is the proof of the power behind us and the future before us. So great a birth initiates great happenings. Many are to be tried as by fire and not a few will be found to be pure gold : but whatever happens, whether victory or defeat, speedy fulfilment or prolonged struggle, the fact that he has been born, and lived here in our midst, in the sight and memory of men now living is proof that

THE ECHOES OF THE TEACHINGS OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

BY

Dr. M. C. Nanjunda Rao.

(An evening talk on Sivaji)

(continued from page 260.)

Sadhu Goswami said that, of the fourfold purposes of life, *viz.*, *Dharma, Artha, Kama* and *Moksha*, the attainment of *Moksha* through the harmonious and proper attainment of the first three *Purusharthas*, is the supreme and final goal of life and until *Moksha* or Realisation of God is attained, man can never be free from sorrow and sin and from the miseries of unending birth and death. He can never become *Dhanya* (blessed) and his life is lived in vain. Such attainment is only possible when one finds and obtains the grace of an enlightened Guru who is himself one who possesses a realised knowledge of Brahman or Atman and who can uplift mankind by his power of grace and universal love.

You must not mistake an ordinary teacher of secular and other sciences or even the clergymen and priests of other religions as real *Gurus*. They are far from being such. A real Guru is one who has not only realised the Atman himself but who can reveal the Supreme Atman to a fit disciple and help him in that realisation. The greatness of such a Guru is simply indescribable and nowhere except in India is the worth of the real Guru known and he is worshipped as God himself. The need of a Guru is nowhere felt as a real necessity for one's spiritual development except in India and most of our religious writings are full of glowing descriptions of the greatness and need of a real Guru.

To be more plain, said Swamiji, the soul can only receive impulse from another soul and from nothing else. We may study books all our lives, we may become very intellectual, but in the end, we find that we have not developed at all spiritually. This insufficiency of book-knowledge to quicken spiritual growth is the reason why we can all talk most wonderfully on spiritual matters and on Philosophy and Vedanta but when it comes to action and the test of character and living of a truly spiritual life, we find ourselves so awfully deficient and lacking in moral stamina. To quicken the spirit the impulse must come from another soul. It is from the impact of that impulse on a thoroughly purified and

fitly developed heart of another that spiritual energy is generated which can shed peace all round, and influence the lives of all that come in contact with them. The person from whose soul such impulse comes is called the *Guru*—the safe real Teacher, and the person to whose soul the impulse is conveyed is called the *Sishya*—the real student.

When Sadhu Goswami so feelingly addressed the audience on the need of each man's finding his own Guru and how one has lived in vain though he be the greatest Emperor of the world, who has not longed for in his heart of hearts and found a real Guru, the admonition went home to the heart of Sivaji and he felt miserable when he contemplated that he had not found a Guru and undergone initiation in his hands and obtained his grace. With this heavy load on his heart, Sivaji returned to his palace but he could not sleep. The feeling of desolation was so overpowering that every minute of that night he spent in prayer. The next morning he got up determined to find a guru, and went in search of Thukaram Doss whom he had known, and whose preachings he had heard and for whom he had the highest regard as a great saint and Bhaktha. He soon found him in a village near Partabgarh and, as soon as he saw him, he fell prostrate before him and begged him to accept him as his disciple and initiate him. The great saint was moved to tears at the great bhakthi and yearning of Sivaji and at his humility, embraced him, blessed him and said "Dear Sivaba, I am quite aware of your great bhakthi and of your earnest hankering after a *Satguru* and one greater than me is waiting for you. I am only a Kumbi (ryot) and ought not to undertake the task of imparting any initiation to others—such a task is meet only for a Brahmana Sannyasin and you will soon meet one and get your heart's desire fulfilled." And so saying he blessed him again and sent him away. What to say of the humility of saint Thukaram, than whom no greater saint lived at that time. Great as he was, a highly realised god-intoxicated soul as he was, capable of teaching the highest truths of Religion and Morality, he refrained from doing an act forbidden to his class. The great ones do not break the law but fulfill it.

Sivaji left Thukaram and went to Partabgarh with a heavy heart. He had fasted the whole of that day, so he bathed and went to the temple of the Devi and intensely prayed that if there was a guru who was going to initiate him and save him from these bondages of worldliness, he might appear in his dream and give him "*Dharsan*" i.e., a vision of him. After partaking the prasad from the Devi's temple, he slept in that temple that

night. In his dream the Devi appeared as a Brahman *Sumangali* or *Suvasini* and said "There is one Ramadoss, an incarnation of Maruthi, who has taken birth only for your sake alone, and you will soon meet him. You will then see what will happen through his association with you. Get up and go and see him." So saying, she disappeared. Sivaji early next morning left the temple and proceeded further in search of Ramadoss came to the village of Chaphal and went to the temple of Sri Rama and there sat in a *Mantap* deeply contemplating. There a Sannyasin by name Narasomalath came to where Sivaji was sitting and asked him why he was so sad and what he was doing. On learning the cause of his sadness and intuitively recognising him as Sivaji *in cognito*, he gave him a description of Sri Ramadoss saying, "Who can describe the greatness of Ramadoss! At the early age of eleven, just when the freshness of youth was dawning upon him the boy then known as Narayan, son of pure Brahman parents, realised that the world was a dream. The Brahman parents had arranged to bring about the marriage of this young boy and everything was arranged on a grand scale. The boy was taken to the marriage pandal and the bride, a blushing and blooming young girl, was brought to his side, he suddenly left the assembly and fled from the marriage ceremony to the forest to practise austere *Tapasya*. Never since the days of Buddha has the goddess of Renunciation chosen so poetic a moment for the deliverance of her devotee. Young Narayan with warm healthy blood coursing through his veins renounced the world, and chose the arduous life of supreme love and devotion to God. For twelve years after that he practised severe religious austerities. Extreme mortification of flesh, vigilant control of the mind, unbroken meditation on his chosen Deity were the chief features of his *Tapasya*. Long before day-break this boy-saint would be seen standing in the waters of the Godavari, muttering the sacred syllables of Gayathri, his mind so lost in contemplation as to make him insensible to the biting of the fish and very often it would be midday before he recovered his normal consciousness. In the afternoon he would attend the religious discourses of pious and learned Brahmans and in the evenings he would go to the temple of *Sri Rama*, his *Ishta Devata*, or Chosen Deity—where he passed the first part of the night in prayers and meditation. Thus day after day this young boy practised his religious austerities. He made light all obstacles so common in the way of spiritual progress; he overcame resolutely all struggles and difficulties and he possessed undaunted courage and was equal to all kinds of *Tapasya*. In the end, with the progress of these tremendous austerities, the

indefinable, subtle and elusive veil that seemingly separates Spirit from matter began to melt away and the young saint in his 23rd or 24th year emerged triumphant from his penance. He realised his own Self and thus became spiritually free—free from the bondages of birth and death, of sin and merit (*Dharma* and *Adharma*); the long-cherished object of his heart was accomplished and if he chose to live thereafter, it was for the world—for the country's good. In short, he became a *Jivanmuktha*.

“After this, he undertook pilgrimages all over India. He travelled from Haridwar to Rameswaram, from the bank of the Indus to that of the river Ganges. Wherever he went he saw the depredations and acts of vandalism committed by the Mussalman rulers. He saw these and wept, the proud spirit of Ramdoss was deeply wounded at those marks of national degradation. So, wherever he went, he tried to rouse the people to a sense of their degradation, establish temples for *Maruthi*, build monasteries, awaken and rouse the masses in different parts of the country to a sense of their own fall and to the necessity of re-establishing their *Dharma*. At times he would go into the forest and spend many days in *Tapasya* in caves—many wild animals would keep prowling about him but cause him no harm—again emerge out of it and go about to establish a strong organisation for the propagation of the Religion. Thus, was Ramdoss occupied and he would soon go over to meet you.” So saying, Somalanath also blessed him and departed from there.

Sivaji intently listened to the accounts of the life and doings of Ramadoss as depicted by Somalanath. The thought of Ramdoss now completely took possession of his mind. His eagerness to find him or at least to have a *Darsana* or vision of him, got such a strong hold of him that he vowed that he would not eat a morsel of food unless he had the vision of his own guru who was going to influence his life and career so greatly. So determined he fasted the whole day, went to the temple and slept there intently praying to the Mother for Her blessings in granting a vision of his Guru. That night he had the desired vision and the tall majestic and magnetic figure of Sri Ramadoss with his characteristic graceful flowing beard and with his *Danda* and *Kamandalu* in his hands stood before him. No sooner Sivaji saw the noble figure than he got up and prostrated before him with tears in his eyes and hair set on end and quite overjoyed and blessed beyond description. Ramadoss blessed him and said “I know your great earnestness and religious zeal; I know all the inner workings of your heart and what you are here for. I know

your great love for your country, your people, your religion, and above all your great solicitude for the welfare of the weak, the women, the cows, Brahmans and your Dharma. Many great things have to be achieved through you. You must go back to your capital and go on with the establishment and expansion of your kingdom and continue cultivating this great Bhakthi in your heart and I shall soon meet you." So saying the figure blessed him and disappeared. It is said that next morning when Sivaji woke up with a great feeling of exaltation and blessedness, he found a cocoanut by his side, which he carried with him as his Guru's prasad and gave it to his wife.

For a few days after that he was attending to his secular duties but in his heart that pining for the meeting of his Guru in physical form was growing stronger and stronger and one day he became so disconsolate that he arranged to go on an hunting trip so as to divert his mind a little.

With a small party Sivaji proceeded to a forest about twenty-five miles from his capital, and each member of the party took his own way and went in search of games. To add to the sense of depression which had settled on the heart of Sivaji, he could not find a single game that day. He got himself detached from the party and wandered far and wide, and yet found no animal worthy of being shot. It was past midday and he began to feel dejected and to fret for not having bagged a single animal, but far away from the spot where he was then standing he discerned a cluster of green trees and noticed one or two animals leisurely moving about them. He slowly found his way to that spot and when he went near what was his surprise to find that not only a few animals but many were to be seen there ; and what was more wonderful he saw the wild animals such as bears and cheetas going about without molesting the deer and other mild animals. This made him refrain from shooting any of them. Besides as he approached that spot a strange feeling of elation began to displace the previous feeling of depression and he felt buoyant and cheerful and a sweet sense of peace seemed to spread not only on his mind but all around. He wondered what that could be due to and without disturbing any of the animals, he slowly approached the spot and ere long he discovered the cause of all that sudden change in his heart. To his great amazement and delight he saw sitting under a huge Banyan tree in an attitude of contemplation, the very noble and grand figure of Ramadoss, just as he had seen him in his dream in the temple at Chaphal. He was in Samadhi perfectly unmindful of his surroundings. Those wild and other animals of

the forest were all prowling about him as if to protect him and be of service to him. The moment he saw the figure his heart bounced with joy. He thanked God with all his heart for this unexpected find and slowly moved nearer and nearer towards the figure and sat in a convenient spot opposite to it, devoutly contemplating on that figure and intently praying in his heart that he might soon be blessed by him. But Ramdoss sat erect, stiff and unmoved. It was getting evening and Sivaji had to go back to his town lest he might be missed by his subjects. He could not bring himself to cut away from this figure, yet his duty compelled him to do so. With this struggle in his mind and with a sense of intense sorrow at having to part with the greatest object of his search he left the spot and went back to his capital, determined to go again the next morning. The whole of that night was spent in sweet contemplation of the saint and in the enjoyment of the feeling of contentment and overwhelming joy it brought with it.

The next morning he bathed and lost no time in going back to the spot where Ramdoss sat in Samadhi. He found him in the same state as on the previous evening. Sivaji also sat in front of him meditating and devoutly praying in his heart that Ramdoss might soon open his eyes and bless him. But even that day he did not awake from the Samadhi state and Sivaji had to return to his capital in the evening. Again he repeated his visit the next morning and returned with the same result. The ministers and other influential subjects of the kingdom got alarmed at the strange doings of Sivaji, at his utter neglect of the state affairs and at his going to the forest every day to see that wizard of the forest, as Ramdoss was called by the people, who had power to enchant all the wild beasts and make them dance to his bidding. One day, they formed a council and approached Sivaji and expostulated with him on account of this neglect of state affairs. They said "Dear Rajah, why are you thus neglecting your state affairs and going every day to that great *Jadu* or wizard. It is not meet for you at this age to do so. Very probably that wizard must have enchanted you also. He is a dangerous man. He plays with the children as a child and makes every child follow him and play with him. All the wild beasts obey him like faithful dogs and play around him. He stays in one place one day and appears in another far away from it the next day. We hear strange stories of his doings. Why do you go after him? If you want to learn all about your religion, we have eminent Pandits and learned Savants who can be made to discourse on the Gita, Upanishads and all Sastras, so as to enlighten your mind

on all these subjects and give you that knowledge that you are so assiduously seeking after." In these and many other ways they requested Sivaji to desist from his going to Ramdoss. But Sivaji simply smiled at their expostulation and said that knowledge which he was striving after could not be had from books or imparted by learned Pandits and Savants. He hoped that he would soon obtain the grace of his Guru and become blessed. So saying he paid his usual visit to the place where Ramdoss sat in Samadhi. For nine full days Ramdoss never awoke from his Samadhi and on the tenth day he opened his eyes, saw Sivaji sitting before him at a distance and with a benignant smile beckoned him to go near him. Sivaji was so overjoyed at his being recognised by his Guru and went near and prostrated before him. Ramdoss embraced him and asked him what became of the cocoanut he gave him at the temple at Chaphal that night. Sivaji answered him that he had preserved it and kept it in Puja. This confirmed in the mind of Sivaji that this was the very person who gave him the Darsan that night. Ramdoss asked Sivaji to go and bathe in a rivulet close by and return to him. Sivaji bathed and returned with all things required for worship. Ramdoss initiated him and gave him the great *Taraka* Mantra of thirteen letters called *Thrayodasa Akshara* Mantra and blessed him. Sivaji's joy knew no bounds. He was simply transported into a different realm altogether. He could never bring himself to think of separating himself from his great Guru who had so benevolently opened his eyes to a knowledge of the Real. Sivaji therefore asked permission of his Guru that he might stay with him always and serve him. At this request Ramdoss showed some feeling of annoyance and said "Is it for this that you have come to me? You are not an ordinary man. Your duty is to establish the Dharma which has been tottering on account of the influence of the Mahomedans. You have to destroy the Mlechchas, and protect all the weak, the Brahmans and Sadhus. I shall always be near you whenever necessity demands. Let your Bakthi or love of God be practised in secret, while outwardly you attend to all your duties and uphold your Kshatriya Dharma." So saying he blessed him again and gave him a cocoanut, a handful of earth, two handfuls of horse dung and four handfuls of stones and sent him away. Sivaji brought these home and gave them to his mother Jija Bai recounting all his experiences to her. Jija Bai was well-pleased at her son's piety and love of spirituality and asked him what meant those handfuls of earth, horse dung and stones? To which Sivaji who had intuitively grasped the significance of those presents from his Guru, replied "The cocoanut is for

my prosperity, by handfuls of earth, horse dung and stones, it was meant that I would conquer many countries, raise many armies and capture many forts." Jija Bai the proud mother blessed her son and embraced him. And Sivaji was only twenty-one years of age when he received his initiation at the hands of Sri Ramdoss thus showing to the world that the development of love of God and the Spiritual faculty is not a thing to be put off till one became old, decrepit and unfit for further work as is generally supposed, nor is it incompatible with the assiduous, hard and trying duties of even worldly affairs. On the other hand, real spirituality grows side by side with our worldly duties. Running away from the world is not necessary nor commendable. Renunciation is not the negation of noble sentiments and higher aspirations but the acceptance and carrying out of all our duties, irrespective of consequences and with an instantaneous readiness to throw away everything at the word of God.

To be in the world and yet not of it is the ideal which every one should cherish and strive to reach. How Sivaji kept that ideal always before him and how he strove to attain it we shall make out from a few incidents in his life.

(To be continued.)

ADWAITISM OR MAYAVADA.

(continued from page 307.)

Superficially, the *Parinama Vada* appears to be quite easy of comprehension, satisfying, as it does, all the assumptions and premises of a popular philosophy ; moreover, as it gives something like a synthetic aspect of the creator and the created, linking the latter with the former in the nexus of inseparability of sequence, it very well forms the starting point of Adwaitism. We have seen this *Parinama Vada* as apprehensive of a change, a *Parinama*, in the First Principle, Brahman. Now, let us examine what is the real significance of the *Parinama*, this transmutation of the First Principle, with a severer scrutiny. There is a passage in the Chchandogya Upanishad, that tells us : यथा सौम्यैकेन मृत्पिण्डेन सर्वं मृन्मयं विज्ञातं स्याद्वाचारम्भणं विकारो नामधेयं मृत्तिकेत्येव सत्यं । As, by your knowing a clod of earth, all made of earth become known to you, so, by knowing the cause you know the effect. For, this effect, *vicara*,—this change of the cause into the effect, is mere verbal, *i.e.*, it has no real objectivity

THE ECHOES OF THE TEACHINGS OF THE SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

BY

Dr. M. C. Nanjunda Rao.

(Continued from page 394 of Vol. I.)

Before mentioning a few of the incidents in the life of Sivaji which clearly illustrates the great Bhakthi and the highest reverence he had for his illustrious Guru, Sri Ramadas and the great influence exercised over Sivaji by the saint for the uplifting of the nation and the regeneration of the country, it would be interesting to know something about the mission for which Ramadas had incarnated and the message he gave to the nation at that period. We have already mentioned how the Mahratta saints of that age by their preachings and exhortations to the people did invaluable service in rousing the Mahratta minds from a state of religious torpor and directing them to an enthusiastic observance of the Hindu Religion and thus helped the awakening and development of the national spirit amongst them. But it was reserved to Sri Ramadas to take a more intimate and active part with the help of his illustrious disciple Sivaji to bring about that grand consummation of remodelling the Hindu life and institution which had been so sorely neglected for centuries. As a writer in the columns of the 'Mahratta' wrote some time ago, Ramadas was a forceful and commanding personality. The qualities which he brought to bear upon this work of national regeneration were of a high and varied character. To the detached outlook of a *Sadhu* he united the fervour of the pulpit, the farsightedness of the philosopher and the strong practical mind of a politician. He alone could compel admiration by his commanding personality and by the fervour of his preachings, and could even extort reluctant homage from the religious cynics. Others like Thukaram, Eknath, Namdev etc., have been equally great but they were entirely given to the teaching of devotional and ethical greatness. They generally shunned the society whereas Ramadas courted it. They could hardly be persuaded to get out of their religious trance, and move out of the religious groove. Ramadas though equally at home in superconscious meditation could yet find elasticity of mind to turn with undiminished vigour to the wants of the society and even to advocate a regular crusade against the Moslems who persecuted the "mild" Hindus with no sparing hand. He alone could rule its warring elements as easily as a wise father manages his children and with the ease and completeness which revealed the born leader of men. From the heights of spiritual meditation his restless capacious intellect could yet descend

to the level of the society, could find recreation in attending to the burning national questions of the day and then with undiminished ease and elasticity soar back to the regions which years of unremitting penance had made accessible to him. It is only after intervals of many centuries that one comes across such personalities and no wonder that thousands and thousands of people flocked to his favourite residence near Satara to hear his message.

Those were the days of nationalism in Maharashtra. As we have already noticed, for once, patriotism and religious zeal were synonymous words and the proud national spirit of Saint Ramadas was deeply roused at the various signs of national degradation so much visible in the life and conduct of the people at that time. Even before the time of Ramadas earnest minds had begun to resent the disrespect which the Mahomedans had displayed for the culture and the civilisation of the country, and this resentment was not passive but thoroughly active in spirit, and no wonder that by the time the morning sun of national liberation in Maharashtra began to shed his first rays on the hills of Torna (Sivaji's first conquest was the fort of Torna), Saint Ramadas having completed his pilgrimage should have come down to Maharashtra with the object of setting up a strong religious organisation which would kindle the hearts of the people with greater fervour towards the National Faith.

Never, in India, since the days of Sri Sankaracharya, had the idea been conceived of establishing a strong organisation for the propagation of religion. The organisation of Ramadas differed however from that of the great Sankara in many respects. Sankara worked only with the learned. His aim was to create a band of erudite scholars who would be able to cope successfully with the Anti-Vedic sects and religions extant at the time, by the help of the new intellectual armour with which he furnished them. But the object of Saint Ramadas was not to convince or to puzzle the intellect but to capture the hearts of the people. He tried to work with the masses at large. His organisation sought to unite all the Hindus under one banner, it extended over the whole of the Indian Peninsula. Monasteries were established in hundreds and the work of awakening and arousing the masses in different parts of the country was entrusted to zealous intellectual and specially trained disciples. For once, practical knowledge of the world was not despised and we find in *Dasabodh*—one of the chief religious treatise of the great organisation—even minute instructions laid down on all matters of state and religion for the guidance of his disciples.

The aim of his organisation as has already been said, was to bring the Hindus under one banner, *viz.*, Love of God. Minute sectarian differences were to be overlooked and attention was to be concentrated upon the principles common to all forms of Hinduism. The necessity of upholding the national religion helped to unite in one common bond the warring elements of Hinduism; and this

movement was allied with and supported by the movement for national independence. In fact patriotism and religion combined together at this juncture to mould the character of the Mahrattas and enabled them to carry on the great political revival and acquire territories after territories and build a great kingdom almost out of nothing. Not only were the religious leaders intensely patriotic and the leaders on the political side intensely religious but the Mahratta patriotism of the period busied itself not only with religion and politics but sought to remodel the whole national life. Several were the social usages of the Moslem rulers that had crept into the habits and customs of the people and made them imitate the habits and customs of the Moslems, as the present day educated young men are given to the indiscriminate imitation of the habits and customs of the Western nations. Hence the ambition of the Saint Ramadas was to reinstate Hindu ideals and institutions in their pristine glory. While pundits at the court of Sivaji were engaged to weed out the Arabic and Persian words that had crept into the Mahratta vocabulary, the attention of Ramadas was particularly paid to the minutest details of the national customs which had become degenerated by long contact with the Mahomedans, and which he tried to improve by implanting Hindu ideas and wiping out foreign ones and thus he was the one great soul who may be said to have attempted a task which had sorely been neglected for centuries, *viz.*, of remodelling the Hindu life and institutions.

And what was the nature of the message of Ramadas which influenced so largely the minds of the people and made them unite together to build a great nationality? The message was simple and encouraging. He had no sympathy with the weak-minded, the melancholy, the pessimistic and the morbid class of people. He was the champion of the idea of strength, the apostle of the message of hope. "Have strength," he used to say, "strength to think independently, strength to speak boldly and strength to act firmly." Slavery of thought he detested. He was impatient of intellectual thralldom. Never believe—but test always that is what he said. Despair not. Each one has immense potentialities in him. Only in many they are latent. Just kindle the Divine Flame and you can achieve anything. Never go to the wall and weep like a woman. Never even if the whole world be against you, even if mountain-high difficulties were to be encountered! Difficulties are but the helping hand of God. Follow the will of God; obey faithfully and never reluctantly. He is leading you to the goal. What if the path be not strewn with roses? Rather consider life to be a battlefield, and woe to him who comes there with a craven heart! Be strong; strength is life, weakness death. Concentration even in worldly affairs is a kind of *tapasya*; even greatness in secular matters is a spiritual asset. Shun not society; serve it heart and soul; social service is synonymous with divine worship. Approach everyone

through his ideals. Lead society forward and forward. Forget differences, never emphasise them ; they will always be there. He is the true leader of men who can give them some positive ideas. Life is short. Life is fleeting. Death is knocking at the door. Be ready to face it any time, but so long as life endures, let it be consecrated to Self-elevation, Social-service and Divine Worship.

The above excerpts from his voluminous teachings give the gist of his message, a message of courage, strength and hope. And it is this message which kindled so much enthusiasm in the nation and brought about its final emancipation from foreign thralldom.

The above characteristics of Saint Ramadas's activities had to be mentioned at length to show the great resemblance that exists between the modern domination of the Hindu life and institutions by foreign ideals and usages and that of the 17th century ; and to show how great is the need for another such great soul to bring about a similar change in the Hindu life and institutions of the present day. There is no doubt that there is a kind of resemblance to such a great personality in that of our Guru Maharaj Sri Ramakrishna and his great disciple Swami Vivekananda in having established the greatness and pristine glory of our Sanathana Dharma throughout the world. Paramahansa Ramakrishna though engaged in teaching all those that approached him, the necessity of cultivating great devotion and achieving ethical greatness to make oneself perfect, yet his heart was moved to great pity at the great degradation which the masses have been reduced to, and he could never rest contented until he imposed the duty of finding out the means for the uplifting of the masses on his illustrious disciple Swami Vivekananda, and it is even said that when Swamiji flagged in his interest and began to get disheartened at the stupendous nature of the task imposed on him, the figure of Maharaj used to appear before him to gently chide him for his weakness and to give him encouragement and hope to go on with his task. It was this duty that took Swamiji to the West to study the condition of the masses all over the world and to find out how the masses of India could be regenerated and brought back to the great spiritual height from which they have so miserably fallen. The result of his experience gained has been clearly stated for our guidance in those memorable speeches and lectures delivered on his triumphal entry to India during his travel from Colomho to Almora. One can see from those lectures and teachings that the means of regenerating the masses was almost like those employed by Sri Ramadas in the 17th century and that the message of Swamiji was also simple, and was equally one of strength and hope. He too like Ramadas had no patience with the weak and the pessimistic. While Ramadas preached the common love of God as the means of uniting the Mahrattas, Swamiji went a step further and shewed the common divinity that lay hid in the heart of each potentially and how necessary it was to preach the same to the masses in order to infuse strength into

the hearts and restore their lost faith and thus to raise them from the slough of despondency to which they have fallen. In no uncertain voice did he say over and over again, "We have lost faith in ourselves. We have forgotten the glory of our souls. For centuries people have been taught theories of degradation. They have been told that they are nothing. They have been so frightened for centuries, till they have nearly become animals. Never were they allowed to hear of the Atman. Let them hear of the Atman,—that even the lowest of the low have the Atman within, which never dies and never is born—Him whom the sword cannot pierce, nor the fire burn, nor the air dry, immortal, without beginning or end, the all-pure, Omnipotent and Omnipresent Atman. Let them have faith in themselves for what makes the difference between an Englishman and an Indian? The Englishman believes in himself but the Indian does not. Why is it that we, three hundred and thirty millions have been ruled for the last one thousand years by any and every handful of foreigners who chose to walk over our prostrate bodies? Because they had faith in themselves and we had not. Faith—Faith in ourselves, Faith in God, this is the secret of greatness. The Englishman believes in himself and he believes he can do anything. That brings out the God within him, and he can do anything he likes. You have been taught and told that you can do nothing and non-entities you are becoming every day. What we want is strength; so believe in yourselves. We have become weak; we have wept long enough. No more weeping, but stand on your feet and be men. It is a man-making religion that we want. It is man-making theories that we want. It is a man-making education all round that we want. And here is the test of truth—anything that makes you weak physically, intellectually, and spiritually, reject as poison, there is no life in it, it cannot be true. Truth is strengthening, Truth is purity, Truth is knowledge. Truth must be strengthening, must be enlightening, must be invigorating. Have faith in yourselves and stand up on that faith and be strong. That is what we need. What our country now wants are muscles of iron and nerves of steel, gigantic wills which nothing can resist, which can penetrate into the mysteries and the secrets of the universe, and will accomplish their purpose in any fashion, even if it meant going down to the bottom and meeting death face to face." Many more soul-stirring teachings of a similar nature did Swamiji give to different people in different parts of India and he wanted to start some definite organisations to carry on those teachings practically but unfortunately for India, the people were not prepared to carry out his teachings in practice and it looks as if he was born a quarter of a century too early. Still one cannot but discern how those ideas have been gradually leavening the whole Indian society and even beyond India. But the task of trying to preach to the present masses the same glory of our Vedanta and bring them under one banner of the common Love of God irrespective of all sectarian

differences and also of readjusting the social fabric so as to weed out all foreign undesirable usages which have crept into our habits and customs and been undermining all our traditions and sucking out the very sap of our national life, ought to devolve on the disciples of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda, and the formation of a practical organisation to unite the masses together and create in them a spirit of patriotic love for their national culture and traditions is a duty that the Ramakrishna Vivekananda Mission alone ought to undertake and bring to fruition in course of time.

To give only a few incidents from the life of Sivaji which shows in what esteem and reverence Sivaji held Ramadas. After his initiation by Ramadas, Sivaji returned to his palace and made it a point to visit his Guru once a week every Thursday and take advice from him on all matters. He used to consult Ramadas invariably before any undertaking was made. Once it so happened that he was attacked by the Mahomedans who surrounded his capital and he found it impossible to pay his weekly visit to Ramadas. This made Sivaji very sad and restless. He was devising all sorts of means to go to Ramadas any how, but the enemy was too strong and all advised him not to risk his life but to give up the idea for the moment. But Sivaji would not listen to them yet at the same time saw the utter futility of his attempt to do so. In utter despair he vowed in the midst of the large assembly that he would not do anything—not even move his little finger to defend himself against the attacks of the enemy without consulting Ramadas. So determined he turned from the assembly to go to his private apartment when suddenly Ramadas appeared in the assembly to the wonder and amazement of all that were present, who one and all including Sivaji prostrated before him. Ramadas blessed them and told Sivaji that he should not vow like that in future for it might be, he said, that he was far away from him and not able to accede to his wishes; but Sivaji insisted on consulting him always whatever might be the circumstances. Ramadas though pleased at the great Bhakti or faith of Sivaji, advised him not to do so but to consult the wishes of Bhavani whenever he was in doubt about any matter. Sivaji asked him what he should do if the Devi did not appear to him in vision. Ramadas gave him certain definite instructions as to how he should proceed to ascertain the wishes of the Devi, how he should bathe, keep vigil and fast, keeping two persons near him one to write down the questions and the other to take down the answers which would be given by the Devi through Sivaji himself after first making Sivaji to get into a condition of trance. So saying Ramadas assured him of his success against the Mahomedans and disappeared from the scene. Several have been the so-called miracles performed by Ramadas as necessity arose, such as feeding two thousand followers of Sivaji on one occasion from food received from a cave, of creating water to quench the thirst of the people from under a rock and the sacred place where this occurred still goes by the name of Kābadi Yogadanda Thirtha. But

let us note one instance which gives a striking proof of the highest unattachment which Sivaji had for anything worldly and the great sacrifice he had made in his heart to the feet of his Guru namely of the three great sacrifices of body, mind and all his possessions which a true disciple has to make to his Guru or God incarnate on Earth. It is said, that one day Sivaji was in the fort of Satara, and saw Ramadas begging in the city below. He went to his *chitnis* (head writer) Balaji Abaji and dictated an order, sealed it with the royal signet and went down into the street where Ramadas was begging and placed it in his wallet. Ramadas said, "Does paper appease hunger?" And on opening the paper he found it contained the gift of Sivaji's whole kingdom to him. Ramadas asked Sivaji what he proposed to do after he was dispossessed of his dominions, to which Sivaji replied that he would pass his life in the service of his great preceptor. "Very well," said Ramadas, "follow me now." He threw his wallet over the king's shoulder and asked him to go and beg and ask for alms. Sivaji readily obeyed and without the least hesitation or any feeling of shame, he went from house to house in the very fort of Satara, and begged and when he had collected sufficient flour, he went to the river with Ramadas and laid the alms he collected before him. Ramadas baked two cakes (*chapaties*) from it and ate one himself and gave the other to the king. After breakfast, Ramadas asked Sivaji how he liked his new calling to which the reply was that he was perfectly satisfied with it. Then Ramadas asked him to take back his kingdom to which Sivaji with a saddened heart replied, "You may ask me to do anything but do protect me from the sin of *Daththapaharam*, i.e., of taking back one's own gift." Then Ramadas inquired whether Sivaji would obey his commands, and being answered in the affirmative, he bade him go back to his palace and rule his kingdom in the name of his preceptor. And this the monarch readily obeyed and from that day, as a sign that the kingdom belonged to an ascetic, he adopted the ascetic's orange coloured cloth for his banner—the great *Bhugwa Jhanda* as it was called. This banner is still preserved in the museum of collections of various things which belonged to Sivaji, so enthusiastically obtained from various sources and at such great expense by Mr. Purushothama Vishram Mowjee of Bombay. Such indeed was the great and pure heart of Sivaji which had no attachment whatever to the things of the world. His conduct throughout shows an unwavering adherence not to the exigencies of the passing moment, nor to projects of personal ambition, but to certain leading principles of action and administration which he had prescribed to himself as the adequate and necessary means to his grand end.

Swami Vivekananda grew very enthusiastic when he came to this portion of the narrative and said "Is such a great and pure soul to be branded down as a mountain rat, a free-booter and a treacherous deceitful man? That is what you have learnt of the great hero, a hero to whom his whole kingdom was but a straw, a hero

who did not flinch from the act of begging in his own fort imposed on him by his Guru. You ought to be ashamed to hand down such a sacrilege about Sivaji to your children."

But I meekly asked Swamiji whether the conduct of Sivaji towards Afzul Khan the Agent of Bijapur, was not an unmerited treachery and how Swamiji would explain the conduct of Sivaji on that occasion.

"Yes," said Swamiji, "I know superstition, cruelty, treachery and deceit have been alleged against him by English Historians who have blindly followed Mahomedan writers but those who have learnt the inward life of Sivaji know exactly how Sivaji acted even in that one instance, which has been depicted as a great blot in his character. Sivaji's private life was never stained by sensuality and equally spotless was his public career, though dire necessity compelled him to undertake some measures for self-defence, which are considered so questionable though in fact there exists not the least ground for doing so."

I begged Swamiji to kindly explain clearly the circumstances connected with the death of Afzul Khan at the hand of Sivaji and the Swamiji though late that night readily condescended.

(To be continued.)

RANDOM NOTES.

BY

A Thinker.

The prevalence of annual Conferences, and creation of Parliaments and other institutions on the Western model, are curious phenomena eloquent of the unreality of our present culture and the inefficiency of our modernised existence. Our old life was well-organised on an intelligent and consistent oriental model. The modern life of the West is well and largely organised on an intelligent and consistent occidental model. It materialises certain main ideas of life and its well-being, provides certain centres of life, equips them efficiently, serves the objects with which they are instituted. Our old life also did exactly the same. But it is sad to observe that this is precisely what our modern life fails to perform. Its institutions are apes of a foreign plan, unintelligent expressions of an idea which is not ours; they serve no civic, no national purpose. They are the spasmodic movements of an organism whose own life is arrested, but which feels itself compelled to move, however awkwardly and uselessly, if only to persuade itself that it is not dead. Our Conferences and Congresses which meet but once a year if nothing occurs to prevent them, have really no intelligent

Through Vivekananda the exquisite trinity of love and faith and hope have blossomed and are bounteously bearing fruit. The Word cannot return void unto its Author, "Flee unto Him for shelter with all thy being" said the Blessed Lord; "By His grace thou shalt obtain supreme peace, the ever-lasting dwelling-place."

THE ECHOES OF THE TEACHINGS OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

BY

Dr. M. C. Nanjunda Rao.

Sivaji and Afzul Khan.

(Continued from page 125.)

As regards the events connected with the death of Afzul Khan, said Swamiji, it is rather difficult to say at this distance of time what exactly is the truth, as the various accounts given by the Mahratta and Mahomedan chroniclers of the period are so conflicting and contrary to each other. These chroniclers have indented upon their own imagination, each in his own way and according to his own bias. Mahomedan historians whom Grant Duff and other English historians blindly follow, have charged Sivaji with treachery* but the Mahratta chroniclers both Sabhasada and Chitnis have shown that Sivaji acted purely in self-defence and under the guidance of Mother Bhavani, in this particular instance. To understand the whole situation and judge the events that happened in their proper light a certain amount of intuition and faith are necessary, and a brief description of the various events that led to this marvellous deed of Sivaji is of utmost importance in throwing a flood of light on the character and conduct of the great patriot.

The real trouble with Bijapur arose after the capture of Kalyan after a severe fight by the Mahrattas under Abaji Sandev. The news of the victory was brought to Sivaji and Sivaji showed the usual clemency that always characterised his conduct after victory. The captives were of course deprived of their arms and their horses but their lives were spared and they were given enough of grain and

* Mrs. Besant in her admirable little book recently published viz., 'India—A Nation,' a book that ought to be read by every College Student and other young men—says "The story of Sivaji's courage and far seeing genius, of the Maharatta confederacy which was the outcome of his thought should be read in Mr. Justice Ranade's book. The prejudiced English reports should be disregarded, for the Maharattas are the people most feared and therefore most hated by our Anglo-Indians."

money to support them on their way to Bijapur. The commander of Kalyan, Mullana Ahmed was treated with the greatest respect and sent back to Bijapur with honours. In this connection it would be interesting to note a nice incident which has brought to light, the great regard and solicitude which Sivaji entertained for the protection of honour and welfare of women, and which remained a bright spot in his character throughout his life. At the siege of Kalyan, Abaji Sandev had captured a very handsome girl, the daughter-in-law of Mullana Ahmed, the Governor of Kalyan, and thinking that he would be greatly honoured and rewarded by Sivaji, he presented the girl to Sivaji. Sivaji was struck by her beauty and he was only twenty-nine years of age at the time, and yet he said: "If my mother had had your beauty, how happy would it have been! I too should have looked handsome," so saying, he treated the girl as his own daughter, gave her clothes and other gifts and sent her safely to her own home at Bijapur. Not only this but on many other occasions he had warned his soldiers and leaders never to molest women, children, old people and ryots, particularly the women whose honour he always strove to guard with a parental affection. It must be said to the credit of Sivaji that even during those wild times, he knew no other women than his own lawful wedded wives.

The seizure of Kalyan roused the authorities at Bijapur and they brought pressure to bear upon Sivaji through his father, Shaji. The King of Bijapur, Ali Adil Shah wrote to Shaji then in Karnatic, saying "Your son Siva has caused disorders and plundered our dominion and forts. We have not taken notice of it in view of your good services but you should make him desist from such insolence." Shaji replied, "I have renounced this bad son and his mother. Your Majesty may well devise some remedy to teach him a lesson." But nothing he urged could convince Ali Adil Shah of his innocence and being enraged at his supposed contumacy, he decided to punish him. So Shaji was recalled from his Jagir in the Karnatic and brought to Bijapur having been treacherously seized by one Bajee Ghorpuray at an entertainment given to Shaji and thrown into a stone dungeon the door of which was built up except a small opening and he was told that if within a certain period, his son Sivaji did not submit, the aperture would for ever be closed.

Sivaji, when he heard of the imprisonment and danger which threatened his father, is said to have entertained thoughts of submitting ; but if he even seriously intended to adopt such a plan, it was overruled as Grant Duff says, by the opinion of his wife Sayee Bai, who represented that he had a better chance of effecting Shaji's liberty maintaining his present powers, than by trusting to the mercy of a Government notoriously treacherous. The following conversation between Sivaji and his wife is described in a Persian manuscript found in the library of the India Office and translated by Mr. Jadunath

Sarcar, and is interesting as throwing some light on the humility and wisdom possessed by the wife of Sivaji and how our women were of great help and support in those turbulent times to their husbands. When Sivaji sought her advice, she answered, "Women are foolish. Have I the wisdom to advise you? It would be more proper to ask your officers and experienced servants for the solution of the difficulty. The proverb has it, 'Whatever your innermost mind suggests is conducive to happiness; old and godly men's counsels should be preferred to all other people's; consulting strangers and others is the cause of disgrace and consulting women is the cause of ruin'; therefore it may not be well to follow my advice. Woman's brain is lighter than everything else." Sivaji replied, "It is so indeed, but there are women and *women*. Faithful wives are the mainstay of homes, and hence they are competent to give advice. I have asked you as I know you to be wiser than all else. Whatever your wisdom suggests must be the essence of policy." To which Sayee Bai answered, "To my humble mind it appears best for you not to go to Bijapur for any reason at all. Rely on the true aid of Bhavani; all seemingly insoluble difficulties will be removed by Her special Grace." The advice of his wife decided Sivaji's future action. He turned the tables by offering his services to the Mogul Emperor Shah Jehan and the protection of the Emperor was found effective enough to secure Shahji's release from prison.

It is only after this that Sivaji commenced the real conflict with Bijapur power. This conflict brought Sivaji in contact with more powerful Mahratta Jagirdars in the Bijapur service and Sivaji's actions during these years appear to have been to unite these chiefs, as he had united those who lived near his neighbourhood, under his leadership. His offers were, however, declined and one Chandra Row Moray, the most powerful of them, even conspired with one Brahmin Baji Shamraj, who was known to be an unscrupulous hireling of the Bijapur Government, and gave shelter to a party sent from Bijapur with the intention of surprising Sivaji and assassinating him. The plot was discovered and the Bijapur agents were in their turn surprised by Sivaji. As Chandra Row Moray could not be reconciled to the view of Sivaji, he was assassinated by his agents, and this led to the conquest of Javli, which opened the way to further conquests ending in the submission of most of these principal Jagirdars to the influence of Sivaji.

These successes brought matters to a crisis and the Bijapur authorities resolved to make a supreme effort. A grand durbar was held and the King of Bijapur resolved to send an overwhelming force under his ablest Pathan General, Afzul Khan. This Afzul Khan is said to have brought about the untimely death of Sivaji's elder brother Sambaji in the Karnatic and was an implacable enemy of Shaji and Sivaji. He had ostentatiously undertaken in open Durbar

to capture the mountain rat—as he called Sivaji, dead or alive. The King of Bijapur presented Afzul Khan with costly clothes, jewels, elephants, horses and immense treasure and having commended his valorous spirit he gave him a retinue of 12,000 horses and 10,000 infantry. Afzul Khan proudly marched at the head of this army and reached Tuljapur. Here he broke to pieces the idol of Sri Bhavani, the tutelary deity of Sivaji's family, and ground the pieces to dust. Thence he proceeded to Pandharpur, broke the image of Vitoba, killed cows within the shrine and polluted it. Thence he went on to Wai. His march therefore had all the appearance of a religious war and mutually excited the worst passions on both sides. It was a struggle of life and death to the victor or the vanquished. Sivaji and his councillors perceived the gravity of the situation. Tanaji Malusray had been sent to find out the movements of the Bijapur army under Afzul Khan and bring the news. He had not returned. On all such grave, critical occasions as was his wont, Sivaji invoked the guidance of his Goddess Bhavani but no reply was vouchsafed to him. To quote from Colonel Meadows Taylor's description of this event in his historical novel Tara, "Sivaji once in his life grew weary and a shadow of gloom settled on his countenance." With this heavy heart he went to his mother Jija Bai for solace and consolation. She met him at the threshold of the door and with her usual manner, passed her hands over his face and neck, kissing the tips of her fingers, while bowing low, Sivaji touched both her feet, then his own eyes and forehead.

"Is Tanaji arrived my son," she asked, "that thou hast broken the reception so early?"

"No mother," he said, "No, there is no news and that vexes me," and both went in. The mother sat on a mattress and Sivaji lay down resting his head on the lap of the mother and said "Mother, hast thou been with the Goddess to-day? To me she is dim and mournful; I ask my heart of her designs but there comes no answer. Is her favour gone from us?"

"Who can tell Her purposes, my Life?" she replied. "We are only Her instruments, O, fail not in heart. If there be troubles, should we not meet them? If She bid us suffer, shall we not suffer? But O fail not, doubt not, remember your father doubted and failed, and what came of it but weary imprisonment, fine, pain, shame and failure? O, not so my son, better thou wast dead and I with thee than to doubt and fail."

"The trial will be heavy, mother," he replied, "Here we are safe and I fear not for thee; but for the rest, the cause is hopeless and that is what vexes me. Years of stratagem and arrangement are gone with man's death, and all we have planned is known."

"And, if it be known, my son, dost thou fear?" she exclaimed. "I am only a woman and the priests will tell thee not to trust a woman's

thoughts or designs. I tell thee I am glad. I rejoice that a trial has come to thee. One hour such as thou passed now with thine own heart to speak to thee is worth more to the cause than a thousand priests or a lakh of swordsmen; I tell thee I am glad: for such things only can teach thee to trust thyself, and not to look to others." "And thee, Mother" he said smiling. "No, no, not to me. No, not to me, except when the Goddess speaks by my mouth," she replied quickly "I am but a woman else, fearful of thee, my son, fearful of the bullet, the sword, the lance, the wild fray of the battle, fearful of—"

"Nay, Mother," he cried sitting up and interrupting her, "not of the sword or the battle; there I am safe, there I fear not. Were I but there now, this heaviness at my heart would pass away. 'Har, Har, Mahadev,' the cry, the shout rings in my ears and urges on. Then there is no time for thought, as now in this silence."

"And it shall ring again, my son," she replied, "Fear not, doubt not, only act, that is all. Oh Mother, Oh Holy Mother," she cried standing up and lifting her joined hands towards the deep blue sky, "Come thence, come from the sky into Thy daughter's heart, teach me what to say, how to direct him or direct him Thyself. Oh, Mother, we do all for thy name and land, and for the faith so long degraded, let us not fail or be shamed."

After this she went into the temple, watched alone and prayed; then returned and said reverently, "The Mother is in sorrow herself and needs comfort. No matter, I will entreat Her."

"Surely She hath heard already," replied her son, after another pause, "for my soul is better for thy words—stronger, mother. I see how it will be. I will only say we must work and work for ourselves. If my people will only trust me, yes mother, if they only trust me, we shall have victory and I will not disappoint them or you."

"Now, a thousand blessings on thee, Sivaji Bhonsle, for those words", cried his mother passing her hands over his head. "I have no fear now—none. Go to the Katha; tell them that their time is come and when you cry 'Har, Har, Mahadev,' each shout of theirs will echo the death-cry of a thousand infidels," so saying she went in.

He watched her intently as she left him and disappeared behind a curtain. An expression of triumph lit up his large dark eyes and expressive features. "She said I must act for myself" he cried aloud, "Yes mother, I will act for thee first and then for the people and there shall be no idle words again, only 'Har, Har, Mahadev' when the fire is on the hills."

The cause of the depression of spirits and Mother Bhavani herself being in sorrow as said by Sivaji's mother—as you will see below, was due to the destruction of the great Bhavani's Temple at Thuljapur and the slaughter of many cows there.

Sivaji had ordered a Katha, and as was already said, all knew, when this took place, that it was a prelude to some great act or an expedition. All had assembled on the mountain and just then a single horseman came breathlessly riding and entered the pandal arranged for the assembly, and when he came to light all recognised Tanaji Mulstray. Sivaji, who was so anxiously awaiting his return, asked what news he had brought.

"Of sorrow, yet of joy, my prince," replied Mulstray, disengaging himself. "I heard the news at Jutt and I made a vow which only that altar can clean me of, that I would not sit and rest till I had told it to you and the people. Rise all ye," he shouted, "and listen to my words."

"Listen," he continued, "O beloved prince and people, we have fallen upon evil days, for the Goddess, our Mother, has been insulted, and Her temple at Thnljapur desecrated. Yes," he continued, lifting up his hand to stay the cry which was about to break out, "Afzul Khan has cast down the image of Thulja Mata, plundered the temple of its wealth, slain the Brahmins and sprinkled the blood of sacred cows over the shrine ; and now the altar there and the Mother are my witness that I have told this grief to ye only."

Then burst forth a strange cry, a blending of individual cries of grief or revenge, into one common roar from those thousands which reverberated through the whole mountain, which at a motion of the hand of the Prince once more became still.

"I thought the Holy Mother was in sorrow" he said, "for She has hidden Her face from me these many days, and my mother too sought Her but in vain. And now, we know the reason. O my people shall it be so ? Shall the Mother's temple be desolate ? Not while Sivaji Bhonsle lives and ye live ! Rather we died in honour than lived to be pointed as cowards, while She is unrevenged ! Listen," he continued, as he took up the sword called Bhavani lying at his feet, "This ye all know, is named after the Mother and see !" He drew it from the scabbard, "She hath a light and a lovely face, but it must be dimmed in Moslem blood, let her drink it freely, so I swear, and so ye will answer to my cry Har, Har, Mahadev."

Not one of all that assembly who wore a sword was there that did not draw and wave it as his chieftain had done, and cried "Har, Har, Mahadev."

After the assembly broke up Sivaji had a long talk with Mulstray and when he heard all the details about the composition of the large army that was marching under Afzul Khan and the details of the sack of Thuljapur, it was more than evident to Sivaji, that to attempt to oppose Afzul Khan in the field with the men about him would be madness ; but he might [be drawn on with specious promises of

sub-mission into wilds where his cavalry and his artillery would be useless and in those jungles the men then present would be ample against ten thousand Mahomedan Infantry.

Thus Sivaji resolved to meet his great antagonist on a spot carefully chosen by himself and he kept his own counsel and took all care and caution making all necessary arrangements to meet all contingencies. Afzul Khan also, on the other hand, proud in the possession of the large army that he was leading and certain that Sivaji would not stand up against him in the field, was intent upon one subject only, namely, to bring out Sivaji from the shelter of his forts and, if possible, to capture him in triumph to Bijapur and thus avoid all the perils of a long campaign in a hilly country.

Apparently each was anxious to surprise and capture the other's person, for both knew that in Eastern warfare, the fall of the general leading the army too often determined or greatly influenced the result of the fight."

(To be continued.)

**THE PLACE OF RELIGION IN OUR NATIONAL
DEVELOPMENT AS INTERPRETED BY
SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.***

BY

Dr. T. S. S. Rajan, M.R.C.S. & L.R.C.P.

Full fifty-three human years have passed away since the birth of a powerful personality, destined to make his name eternal in the annals of our country. Looking back into the vista of years that had elapsed since the mortal remains of him, whom the world knew as Swami Vivekananda, have been laid to rest, one can see and feel the new spirit that has arisen amidst us. Short as was his life, his dynamic utterances are developing greater force as years roll on. For prophetic words are seldom uttered in vain. They embody eternal truths restated for the benefit of changing epochs of humanity in language suitable for the occasion. That Swami Vivekananda was a man of the hour needs no proof. Thoroughly imbued with the culture of the West, he drank deep at the fountain of spiritual knowledge at the feet of one who was a living symbol of God-realisation. Contact with a divine mind brought out the latent powers inherent in him and solved once for all the doubts that were lingering in his mind regarding the so-called unknown. The agnostic, the Brahmo, and

* Lecture delivered at the 54th Birthday Celebration of Swami Vivekananda on the 30th January, 1916, at the Ramakrishna Home premises, Mylapore, Madras.

worldly activity, but Karma as defined by the Shastras—directly leads to the supreme end of liberation? This will become clear when we proceed to deal (in our next part) with the fruit of Karma in its *positive* aspect, and so we shall now content ourselves with stating the fact that Karma does *not directly* lead to the fruit of final emancipation, but only *indirectly* through various intermediate steps. The passages quoted at first must not be understood literally, but only with the qualification just stated,—a qualification implied at first and left to be understood by the student of the Vedanta in the later stages of his course of thought and enlightenment.

THE ECHOES OF THE TEACHINGS OF SWAMI YIVEKANANDA.

BY

Dr. M. C. Nanjunda Rao.

Sivaji and Afzul Khan.

(Continued from page 310.)

Although Sivaji thought that it might be better to surprise Afzul Khan, still he was uncertain what to do. Conflicting ideas crossed his brain and worried him. At first he thought of giving battle to Afzul Khan though his ministers and followers dissuaded him from doing so and were more for peace than for battle. The following conversation between Sivaji and his ministers recorded in Mankar's "The life and exploits of Sivaji" throws a flood of light on his character. Sivaji said, "Let us fight and leave the rest to God. I would never advocate peace;" but they replied that if the attempt was successful, well and good; if not, the result would be fraught with danger. The king said that if peace was made he apprehended danger to his life, but that if a battle was given, it would be all the same for them whether they came successful or fell in it, as in both the cases their names would be immortalised. The precept laid in the Gita, he said, was in favour of such a course; there was no other alternative but that a battle should be given. The King further said that his mother Jija Bai and his young son Sambhaji should be sent to Rajagad, so that if Afzul Khan was victorious he might dispose of him (King) alone as he liked, and if he fell in the battle there was Sambhaji who might be placed on the throne and to whom fealty may be sworn. The king then proceeded to Pratapgad and ordered Nettaji Palkar to follow him to the Ghats with the army and form an ambuscade on the top of the Ghats and that he would then try to send emissaries to Afzul Khan for the purpose of apparently negotiating peace and thus seduce him to a conference. Meanwhile, Afzul Khan himself, after reaching Wai, hit upon the plan of sending an embassy to Sivaji for the purpose of negotiating with him and treacherously catching him alive. Whereupon he sent for a Brahmin minister of his, called by various names by different authors, namely, Krishnaji Panth, Gopinath Panth or Patanjali Panth, and instructed

him to go to Sivaji and deliver the following message—"Your father Shahaji and the Bijapore Government have been old friends and therefore there should be no misunderstanding between you and them. I shall request the Government to make over to you the Konkan proper as a Jagir and to ratify your possession of the hill-forts belonging to the Government already taken by you and to satisfy all your desires with regard to Sarinjams (or villages and lands granted as inams for public service); you may have an interview with the Emperor but if you do not wish it, it may be dispensed with." Afzul Khan told Gopinath Panth thus to try his best to induce the King to come for an interview with him but that if Sivaji did not wish to come, he might inform him that he (Afzul Khan) was ready to see the Rajah if personally allowed. When the envoy of Afzul Khan went to Sivaji, he sent words to him and he was received by Sivaji with the utmost distinction. As instructed by Afzul Khan the envoy at first took a high tone as to outrages and treason on the part of the Rajah and of the clemency and wisdom of the sovereign he represented. There should have been no attempt at insurrection because the cause was hopeless by force and the royal ear was ever open to suppliants for justice, if submission were made. The Rajah did not reply personally, but one of his own Brahmin officers, answered eloquently and yet respectfully "What had been done? No redress had been given for injury, for extortion and local oppression. In despair some retaliation had been made. It was the mountain custom even by village against village, and did not affect higher relations, which would only become the more firmly consolidated when the cause of quarrel was past. But", he added in conclusion, "the details are private matters and will be discussed better in privacy, and through Afzul Khan alone does the Rajah wish to have them arranged. What have we here to oppose him—we have no concealments, no means of defence against such a force as his."

"Indeed no!" said Sivaji, smiling, "an army of elephants has been sent to crush ants' nests as the proverb hath it; and if the noble Khan will remain and take charge of the country now under me I will resign it to him most cheerfully and become his servant. Wilt thou say this to him?" "Indeed my Prince" returned the Brahmin. "Afzul Khan is a humane and generous man and has no personal enmity against you, my lord." "We will at least put it to the proof," returned the Rajah good-humouredly. "You are witness that you have seen no preparation for defence or resistance, and the sooner he comes, the better. We cannot hurry him and the force; but we will at least make preparations for a peaceful entertainment; and if the Khan will accept of our rude mountain hospitality instead of the Jihad we hear he has been preaching against us, it will be a happy thing for all." So saying the Rajah ordered flowers and *pan* to be distributed in order of precedence to the Envoy and all his suit and dismissed the assembly. Sivaji then whispered into the ears of the confidential Brahmin who was with him, "See that the Khan's Envoy be separately accommodated. I must visit him privately to-night and thou must be with me Krishnaji; I will come to thee at the first watch."*

* I am constrained to give this part of the incident in detail and follow the description given by Col. Meadows Taylor in his *Tara* in order to show the inner workings of the minds of the various personages connected with this affair and the various circumstances that led to the final result so that Sivaji's share in this deed might be properly appraised.

Then Sivaji went in and saw his mother and said, "Mother you saw the Khan's Envoy. I expected some stupid, wrong-headed, supercilious Mussalman, but behold he has sent a Brahmin. I think the Mother will give him to me." "Fear not" she replied. "If he be a true Brahmin, the Goddess hath given him to thee, I will go to her for watching and I will pray her to guide thee" and so saying she went into the shrine

Sivaji sat as before and mused if he could only get Afzul Khan into his power, and hold him sure as hostage that he might make his own terms. Would the Brahmin aid him in this? A word from him to Afzul Khan to guide the army to the defiles was enough—for once the troops entered his debles they were at his mercy. There was no escape—the whole must surrender or be slain. To separate Afzul Khan from his troops was therefore his chief anxiety. As yet the means of achieving that end had assumed no more definite form; and in respect of the final result his mother, strange to say, was altogether silent; but she had again taken up the position she had assumed before the shrine of the Goddess Bhavani for many days past and his belief in her inspiration was not to be shaken.

Late that night muffled in a coarse blanket and accompanied only by the Brahmin before mentioned and a few attendants the Rajah descended from the fort and passed rapidly on to the house where the envoy had been located and sent word to say that there was a messenger from the Rajah who wished to speak with him. "Admit him" was the reply; and Sivaji could see as he entered, that the Brahmin drew towards him a short heavy dagger-sword, and placed it so that the hilt lay close to his right hand. "Be seated, friend" said the Envoy, "and tell thy business. What doth Sivaji Bhonsley desire of me?" The Rajah's face was tied up with a handkerchief, which partly concealed his mouth and he changed the tone of his voice, and he had passed his hand, covered with white wood-ashes, across his nose, eyes, and forehead, as he entered, which altered the expression of his eyes very considerably. It was evident that he was not recognised. "Sivaji Bhonsley desires the prosperity and advancement of Brahmins" replied the Rajah, "and to enrich them is his sole care. He worships them and would fain have them as powerful as in the days of the ancients, and in this desire thou canst assist." "I assist! How friend? I, a Brahmin, am a receiver, not a giver—and am only a servant to the unclean," he added with a sigh.

"It need not be so, Pandit. The fame of thy learning hath preceded thee, and the Maharajah desires thy friendship and welfare. I am sent to tell thee this."

"What can I do?" said the Envoy restlessly. "What would he have me do? And who art thou to speak thus to me?"

"No matter who I am—I am authorised to speak" replied Sivaji.

"Look, here is his ring as my authority. 'Is he a Brahmin' the Rajah said, 'and come with Moslem followers to sit in my Durbar? Alas! Alas! That it should be, that the pure and holy should serve the unclean. This is indeed the age of iron, and of debasement.'" The Brahmin writhed in his seat. "There are many besides me," he said, "who serve the people of Islam."

"Who serve the destroyers of Toolja Mata, the defilers of her temple, the slayers of Brahmins and of sacred kine everywhere! O, Shame, Shame!" cried the Rajah eagerly.

"I was not at the shrine when the affray took place," said the Brahmin apologetically. "I could not help it."

"Has then a Brahmin's holiness become so debased that he says only, I could not help it?" returned the Rajah. "Is it pleasing to the Mother, think you, that her people should fawn on those whose hands are red in the blood of her votaries?"

"I would fling my service at the feet of Afzul Khan and even of the Sultan himself could I but serve with Hindus as I desire to serve," explained the Brahmin.

"The opportunity might be found, friend" answered the Rajah, "If it were truly desired; but proof of fidelity would be required. Would it be given? What is the Maharajah's desire? Dost thou know it?" "I guess it" said the Brahmin, "for I am not easily deceived by appearances, and I understood his looks to-day, if I mistake not. Could I only speak with him? Canst thou take me to him?" "I can tell thy message to him" replied the Rajah, "and will deliver it faithfully. He chose me, else I had not dared to come." The Envoy appeared to hesitate for a moment. "Impossible" he said, "Impossible that I could tell another, what Sivaji himself should alone hear; it could not be."

"Dost thou know me friend?" returned the Rajah, as he untied the handkerchief which concealed his face, and with it wiped the white ashes from his eyes and forehead—"Dost thou know me? It is thus that I salute a holy Brahmin"; and he rose and made a lowly reverence, touching the feet of the Envoy respectfully.

The man strove to return it, but was prevented. "It cannot be," continued Sivaji, "Here, thou art a Brahmin, and I a Sudra. Let it be as I wish. It is for thee to receive the honour, not I." "What would you have me do, Maharajah?" replied the Envoy, now trembling much. "I have done evil in helping the unclean, and would now expiate it if possible."

"I have had many things in my mind, Pandit," replied the Rajah, "and the Mother sends perplexing thoughts; but one thing is clear to me—She must be avenged."

The man echoed the words—"She must be avenged." "Yes", continued the Rajah, "Day and night, by old and young, rich and poor, man or woman, there is that one cry going up from Maharashtra—Avenge the Mother! and yet before that force we are powerless." "Where are the Mawulles? Where are the Hetkurees we have heard of, and the gallant Tanajee?" cried the Brahmin excitedly. "What art thou doing, Sivaji Bhonsley? Men say of thee that thy mother holds thee back, else, 'the fire should be on the hills.'"

"Good" returned Sivaji, smiling; "It is as I thought, and there is yet a Brahmin who is true. What dost thou advise?"

"Hark!" said Gopinath, "Come nearer. If I bring Afzul Khan and his men within the defiles, will it content thee? If I do this, what wilt thou do for me?" "I have prepared for that already—a Jahgeer, a high office, secular or among the priesthood, as thou wilt,—double thy present pay, whatever it be,—and ensign of rank and—my friendship. Look, Pandit" cried the Rajah, springing closer to him and drawing a small bright knife from his breast, "If were easy

to slay thee—for my knee is on thy weapon—and so prevent my proposal being known : but it is not needed. Fear not” he added, for the drops of sweat were standing on the Brahmin’s brow under the terror he felt—“Fear not ! Only be true, and Sivaji Bhonsley will not fail thee. When he has a kingdom thou shalt share its honour.”

“Give me time to write”, said the man trembling under conviction of his own treachery and the excess of temptation to which he was exposed ; “I will give the letter to-morrow.”

“Impossible, Pandit,” replied the Rajah : “The messengers are ready without, and they will bear what must be written to the Khan”

“Who will take the letter ?”

“The Brahmin who spoke for me this morning ; he and some horsemen are now ready.” “But to the Khan himself there must be no harm done,” said the Pandit. “To him and his son I owe many kindnesses : for the rest, as thou wilt. Keep the family as hostages.”

“As guests yonder” replied the Rajah ; “He will be safe, he and his. Shall I send for writing materials? Krishnaji ! sit there,” he continued, as his attendant entered ; “see that what is written is plain.”

And the Envoy wrote in the Persian character, in which he was a proficient, and which the other secretary understood :—

“I have seen the Rajah, his fort, and his people, and there is nothing to apprehend. They are all beneath notice : but in order to settle everything perfectly, and to inspire terror, my lord should advance with all the force, according to the plan devised here, which the bearer, one of the Rajah’s Secretaries, will explain personally, and which would be tedious to write. In a strictly private interview, which will be arranged, the Rajah Sivaji will throw himself at the feet of the Envoy of the King of Kings and receive the pardon which he desires. More would be beyond respect.” “It is enough” said Sivaji when the writing was explained to him. “It will have the desired effect. Take this letter, Krishnaji, and set out for camp at once” and turning to the Pandit, “Enough” said the Rajah, “Generations hereafter will record how Panth Gopinath served his Prince. Fear not—it will be well with thee and thine hereafter.”

The letter was despatched to the Khan and Sivaji discussed with the Pandit the programme of the meeting between the Khan and himself. Both had mooted points of etiquette which could hardly be overcome. The Rajah as a prince could not visit the Khan first, nor could Afzul Khan as the representative of Royalty visit the Rajah ; but they could both meet and the barrier of ceremony once broken, it mattered little what followed. No troops were to be present. Attended each by a single armed follower, themselves carrying no arms, they might meet at a place mutually agreed to by the Pandit and Sivaji, and a pavilion was ordered to be fitted up for the occasion. If the Khan pleased, he might bring a thousand of his best horse—more if convenient—to witness the ceremony from below ; but only one attendant besides the palanquin-bearers could advance to the conference. The Pandit would attend the Khan on the one hand while another of the Rajah’s if possible or needful would accompany him from above. No objection appeared, and none was made to these arrangements. Sivaji took leave of the Pandit and returned to the Fort and summoned his

confidential ministers, informed them of what had been arranged and ordered them as to the disposition of the troops and exclaimed "O, the blind confidence of these Bijapore swine! They have neither eyes nor ears, else they had guessed we are not as we seem. But the Goddess Mother has blinded and deafened them and it is as my mother said it would be."

"Where is she?" asked Mulrray "and she should bless us ere we go forth."

"She is in the temple, and uneasy. As the time comes on, they think she will have a visitation," he replied, "Ah! here is someone to tell us. What news Bheemee?"

"The Lady Mother is uneasy Maharaj, and rocking herself to and fro. It is coming on her and ye should be near to listen."

"Come, Friends, let us go" said the Rajah; "On this revelation depends my course to morrow."

When they went in they saw Sivaji's Mother sitting before the Goddess, her eyes shut or if opened for a moment flashing with excitement, her lips trembling and already speckled with foam; and that peculiar sharp, rocking motion of her body which always preceded the final attack.

Suddenly the lady stretched forth her arms and shrieked wildly. Mulrray would have rushed forward but Sivaji held him back. "Wait," he said in a low tone, "No one dares to interrupt her; wouldst thou go to death between her and the Mother; she will come, listen."

There was first a low muttering in which nothing could be distinguished; but words at last followed, to them terrible and awful, as believing in the dread presence of the Goddess, the lady poured them forth with gasps:

"O, I thirst! My children were slain—and no one has avenged them. Blood! Blood! I thirst. I will drink it! The blood of the cruel—of the cow-slayers! All, All—the old and the young; the old woman and the maiden; the nurse and the child at her breast; a'l—all—all!" She continued, her voice rising to a scream. "They who love me, kill for me; for I thirst now, as I did for the blood of the Demons." And the voice sank again to a low, inaudible whisper. Soon after she awoke as if from a swoon and called for water to drink and found Sivaji alone sitting—his companions fearless before an enemy, were cowards before the dread presence in which they believed.

"Ah, thou art here, son" she said turning to him. "Did I speak? Surely the Mother was with me," and she sighed deeply again drawing her hand wearily across her eyes.

"Come and rest, mother," he replied, raising her up and supporting her tenderly. "Come, thou art weary."

"Weary indeed my son" she said—"there is no rest for me till all is finished. Come and I will tell thee everything," and he followed her into her own apartments, where she lay down. The attendant brought water, and she drank a deep draught.

"What did I say, son?" she continued. "Fut no matter. It is all blood before me—Carnage and Victory! Blood!" she cried

excitedly grasping his arm and looking intently into his face. "Art thou ready? Ready for victory! Ready to cry 'Jai Kali! Jai Toolja Mata!'"

"Ready, mother—yes. There is no failing anywhere. The men are at their post, and the signals have been decided upon. No one will escape us now."

"No one will escape" she echoed—"No one must escape—no—not one—not even he."

"Ah, Mother," cried Sivaji, "Not so; surely with pledged honour, soldier to a soldier, and a solemn invitation, it could not be."

"It must be, son," she said gloomily "Else the sacrifice is incomplete and of no avail. Wilt thou risk that for thine own sake—for my sake—for the sake of our faith? I see it all," cried the lady excitedly, "passing before me a triumph of glory over those defilers of the temples of the Gods; thy rapid rise to power; the legions of the hateful Mohammedans trampled in the dust by greater legions of thine own! 'Jai Sivaji Rajah!' shall be cried from Delhi to Rameshwār. Wilt thou now turn back? Wilt thou be forsworn to Her—to the Mother who is our life? Wilt thou be as vacillating as thy father! Beware! Thou art more committed to Her than he—and does She spare back-sliders?" "He is but one to be spared, mother, and that because of my promise," he pleaded.

"I tell thee it cannot be, my son. She will have him—the slayer of the priests—the murderer of hundreds of the people about Her shrine.—And that priest of his who, as all say, led the slaughter, cast down her image, and trampled on it, O, son, canst thou hesitate? Art thou—so firm and true always—now grown weak? Have I borne one in travail who is degenerate? Choose then now—Victory and future blessings: or the result which thou knowest, and we all know, if we fail Her—the death which must ensue. Both are before thee;—choose, boy; I can say no more!" And she turned away her face to the wall. But she had conquered, for there was no defying her will,—always the mainspring of the Rajah's actions—and backed by those seemingly divine revelations in which he devoutly believed, he did not resist her.

"Mother" he said, rising and prostrating himself before her, "I know—I feel that the Goddess is speaking from thy mouth still. I hear and obey. Bless me, O my mother, and my hand will be strong; put thy hands on my head, and the Mother will guide the blow surely." "I do bless thee Sivaji Bhonsley," she returned, placing her hands on his head "In the name of Her who directs us, and with Her power I endue thee. Go and fear not, but do Her bidding—thou shalt not fail. Before you go to the meeting put on a steelcap, a chain armour, wear a 'Wagnak' or tiger's claws on your left fingers and carry 'Bichuwa' (a small crooked dagger) within the sleeves of your right hand. These are Her biddings the import of which you will know only after the event."

Then Sivaji laid his head at the Mother's feet and besought a blessing, and then retired to rest.

The next morning all preparations were made for the meeting of the Khan and Sivaji. The Khan's agent, Panthjee Copinath, being a fat man had left word at the gate that he had preceded the

Khan and would await him at the pavilion. He had seen no one since the night before and he knew only that the Khan would come to meet the Rajah both unarmed. That was all he stipulated for and his part was performed. He believed that Sivaji would seize Afzul Khan and hold him a hostage for the fulfilment of all his demands; and the line of argument in his own mind was, that if the Khan resisted and was hurt, in the fray which might ensue, it was no concern of his. But he did not know the Rajah's intention nor did the Rajah's two Brahmins who had ascended with him, and they all three now sat together upon the knoll awaiting the coming of Afzul Khan from below and the Rajah from above.

The Khan arrived first apparently unarmed but with one trained fencer and expert swordsman Syed Banda and with two other attendants. He was received by Gopinath Panth and seated on the dais in the pavilion. Sivaji dressed and armed in the way he was ordered to do by his mother arrived from above, but halted when he saw Syed Banda standing near the Khan and sent for Gopinath Panth and said, "I have the same reverence for the Khan that I have for Father Shahaji; I am afraid of Syed Banda who is with the Khan: see that he is removed to a distance." Gopinath then went to the Khan and said that Sivaji was timid and caused Syed Banda to be sent away to a distance and the Khan was left with two followers. Sivaji also came down with two followers who were made to stay at a distance and approached the Khan in the pavilion.* The Khan was a tall, robust, huge figure over six feet in height and Sivaji was a lean short diminutive man. When Sivaji approached him the Khan also advanced a few paces to receive him and as customary, both began to embrace each other and while so doing, the neck and head of Sivaji leaned to the left side of the Khan and it only reached his arm-pit. The Khan saw his opportunity and gripped the neck of Sivaji under his arm-pit between his left arm and body as in a vice and suddenly drew a heavy sword that he had concealed in the spacious folds of his trousers and thrust it into the sides of the king who however received no hurt as it only clashed against the steel chain armour in which he was dressed. In the meantime Sivaji who did not expect this, was in a fix and fortunately for him the Wagnak he was wearing on his fingers came to his rescue. The left arm being free, he plunged the Wagnak over the pit of the stomach of the Khan, the only thing he could do at the time. The pit of the stomach being a very tender spot the sudden pain caused by the Wagnak made the Khan loosen his grip of Sivaji's neck, and Sivaji like a deer bounded back. But still the Khan unbaffled hit a severe blow on the head of Sivaji with his heavy sword, but thanks to the steel cap that he was made to wear, the blow only staggered him but broke the steel cap into two pieces. Sivaji did not lose this opportunity, but bounded forward and gave a severe stroke on the neck of the Khan with his Bichuwa or crooked dagger that was hid in his right sleeve and the Khan fell down and raised a cry of "Help, help, murder, murder, treachery, treachery!" and there was tremendous confusion. Hearing this the palanquin-bearers,

* The description of what took place when these two met, are as varied and conflicting as the bias and prejudices of the writers.

Swamiji's version which I give here is corroborated by Justice Ranade as I shall show later on and by Mankar in his small book 'The Life and Exploits of Sivaji' and is the only version which is both rational and natural under the circumstances.

rushed forward and putting the Khan into the palanquin, bore him away. On the way, one Sambhaji Cowjee Mahaldar who saw the wounded Khan being carried away, wounded the palanquin-bearers in their legs and brought the palanquin down to the ground. He then cut off the Khan's head and carried it to the fort. In the meantime, Syed Banda hastened to the scene and showered his sword-blows upon the King. The king took a sword from one of his attendants and while engaged in fencing, averted four blows of Syed Banda by means of his sword. Syed Banda was then on the point of inflicting a wound on the king's hand when Jivba Mahali who was standing watching the combat between the King and Syed Banda, cut the arm of Syed Banda clean off his shoulders and thus averted what might have been a serious blow to the King. The events that followed are matters of history.

From the above narration of events which corresponds in the main with what Swami Vivekananda gave us at the time, but which is described here in the words of Col. Meadows Taylor and others, it becomes evident that Afzul Khan himself had come to meet Sivaji with treacherous intentions, carrying his heavy sword concealed in the folds of his capacious trousers; and that during the act of embrace it was he who seeing that a good opportunity had offered itself enabling him to strangle Sivaji under his arm-pit, was the aggressor and that Sivaji only acted in self-defence. All historians, Persian, English and Mahratta are agreed that the Khan used his sword on Sivaji but no one cares to explain how the Khan carried the sword when the agreement was that he and Sivaji should meet unarmed, except some of the Mahratta Chronicles who clearly show that the act of treachery was on the part of Afzul Khan rather than on that of Sivaji. Sivaji himself who in his conversation with his mother had shown how he abhorred to deal treacherously with the Khan, did not understand at first why such an insignificant instrument as a Wagnak was ordered to be worn and such a small crooked dagger as a Richuwa to be carried hidden under the sleeves; but the events as narrated above, clearly show the purposes served by each one of them. But for the Wagnak Sivaji would not have been able to extricate his neck from the iron grip of the Khan under his arm-pit and but for the steel cap protection over the head, Sivaji would have succumbed to the heavy treacherous blow from Khan's sword, which broke the steel cap into two pieces. Many English Historians who had evidently not seen any Wagnak have written about it as a terrible treacherous instrument, but it is nothing of the sort. As an instrument of offence it is very insignificant consisting as it does of very small claw like-thimbles with slightly curved cutting blades, or as Grant Duff describes it, a small steel instrument made to fit on the fore and little fingers and it has three crooked blades which are easily concealed in a half-closed hand. This Wagnak, the broken pieces of the steel cap and the heavy sword of the Khan can even now be seen amongst the collections of Purushotham Visram Mowjee of Bombay.

All Historians, English, Mahomedan or Mahratta unanimously admit of the Khan's using the sword on Sivaji and while they accuse Sivaji alone of treachery, they have not paused to reflect upon the act of the Khan in carrying this sword hidden under the folds of his capacious trousers, when the agreement was that they should meet each other unarmed. Such is human nature which is always partial to the vanquished and the injured and ignores the motives and

underlying intentions and the compelling circumstances which necessitated the act.

After the defeat of the troops of Afzul Khan, the clemency shown by Sivaji, to all those that submitted, to women, to old and young persons are noted by even the most prejudiced of Mahomedan Historians who have called Sivaji an incarnation of Satan and it shows the great nobility and magnanimity of the King, and is in marked contrast with the wanton cruelty and barbarism of even the present day so-called more civilised nations of the West.

(To be continued.)

THE BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION OF BHAGAVAN SRI RAMAKRISHNA.

At Belur Math.

The birthday celebration of Ramakrishna Paramahansa bids fair to become a world-wide worship and festival. Ardent souls in the West, as well as in the East, are attracted in increasing numbers by his godliness and recognise in him the Gurn of the age. Nowhere is the throb of this universal spirit more distinctly heard and felt than in the heart of the Mission in the Belur Math.

The Thithi Pnja or the actual birthday of Sri Ramakrishna which fell on the 6th March, is really a day of special worship and prayer which are spread out all the twenty-four hours.

The snperb sanctity of the day culminated in the hallowness of the *Homam* ceremony which commenced at about midnight and its conclusion revealed a most elevating spectacle—the giving of the Sannyasa Asramam to the chosen Brahmacharins and the initiation of disciples. In the presence of all the Sannyasins, the President Maharaj, with his mind rapt in prayer, with a heart full of compassion, with blessings on his lips, hands over to each of the chosen the Kashaya cloth and Danda as symbols of renunciation and meditation.

The public celebration of the birthday ranks among the first-rate *melas* in its extent and grandeur. Days before, placards in bold characters announced in Calcutta and its suburbs the coming celebration of Bhagavan's nativity on Sunday, the 12th March, and vigorous activities of the arrangements therefor, were prominently visible.

Incessant was the pouring in of the devotees and the spacious compound of the Math was full before noon. It is estimated that the total number that attended the function would be nothing less than 70,000. Nearly a third of them partook of the Prasad prepared for the occasion. And in this the most important of the functions, the Math authorities were willingly assisted by young men mostly from Schools and Colleges who delighted themselves in loving service and sacrifice.

The only object of engagement for a concourse of this magnitude was Sankirtana. Attempts made at lecturing were found to be futile and impossible. The picture of Sri Ramakrishna was placed in a most exquisitely decorated pandal presenting the appearance of a lovely bower, and the *shamtana* immediately in front of it accommodated a Gauranga Sankirtana party conducted by a famous Bhakta. This and a Kali Kirtana Party were most prominent and drew around them attentive and appreciative audiences. The crowd grew thicker as the day advanced and the atmosphere was thickly filled with the sound of *Hari Bole* and Sankirtana parties interspersed by shouts of "Jai Sri Guru Maharajki Jai."

At nightfall fireworks kindly provided by a Bhaktha were displayed. The guests gradually began to disperse; thus ended a most imposing and inspiring spectacle.